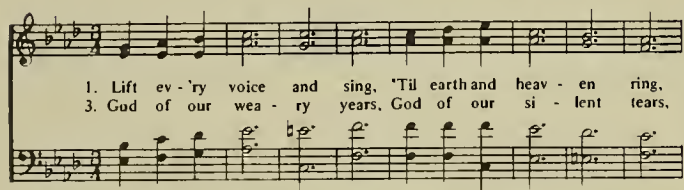


DRUM

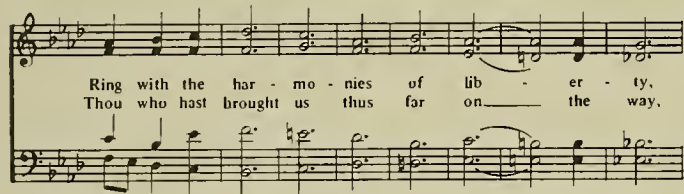


BLACK LITERARY AND ARTS EXPERIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST

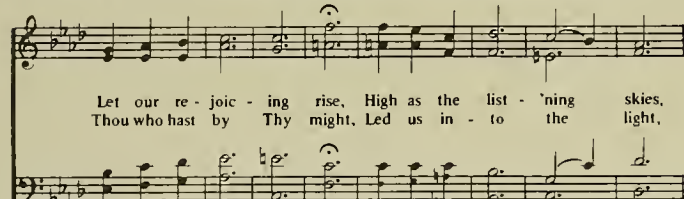
Lift Every Voice and Sing



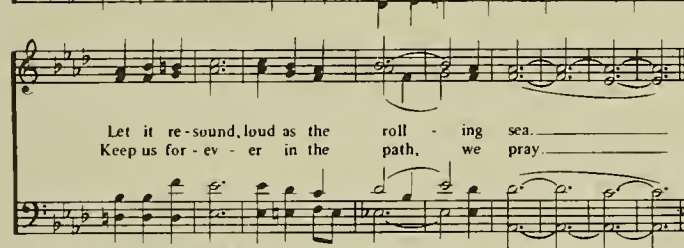
1. Lift ev - ry voice and sing, 'Til earth and heav - en ring,
3. God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears,



Ring with the har - mo - nies of lib er - ty,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,

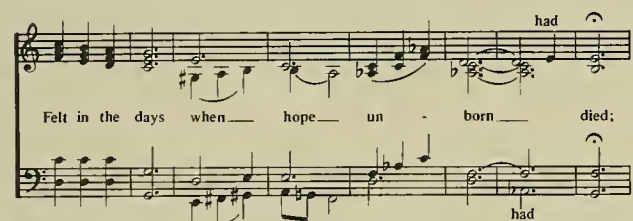


Let our re - joic - ing rise, High as the list - ning skies,
Thou who hast by Thy might, Led us in - to the light,

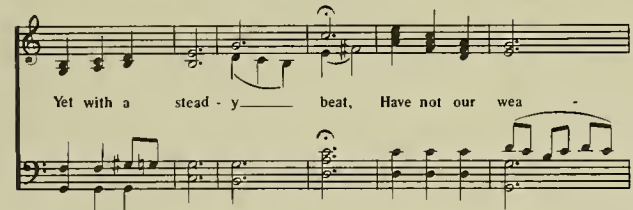


Let it re - sound, loud as the roll - ing sea,
Keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.

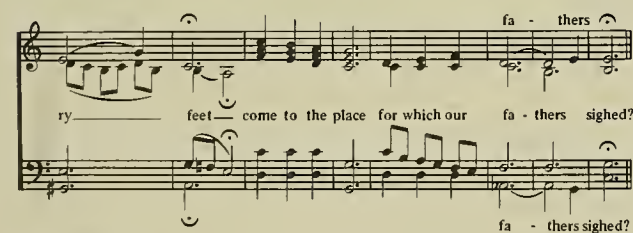
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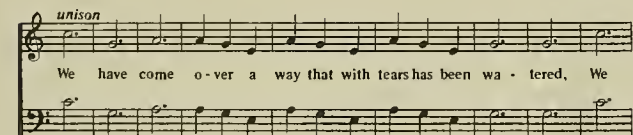
Felt in the days when hope un - born died;
had



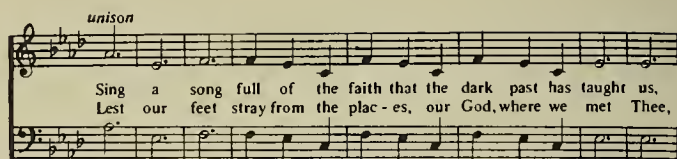
Yet with a stead - y beat, Have not our wea
had



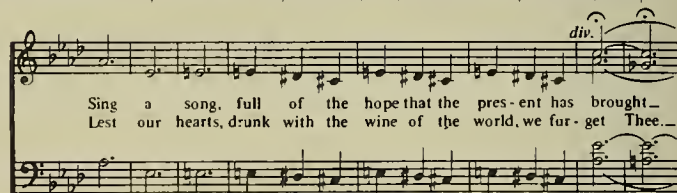
ry feet come to the place for which our fa - thers sighed?
fa - thers sighed?



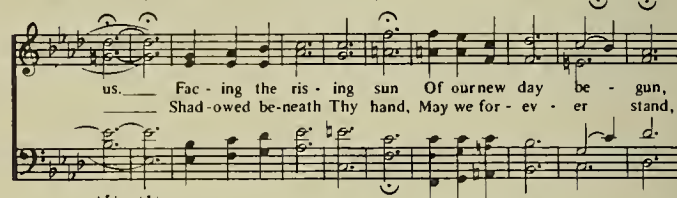
We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - tered, We



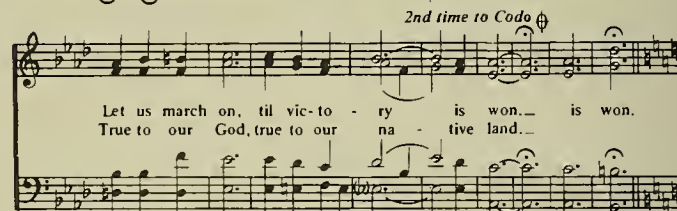
unison
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met Thee,



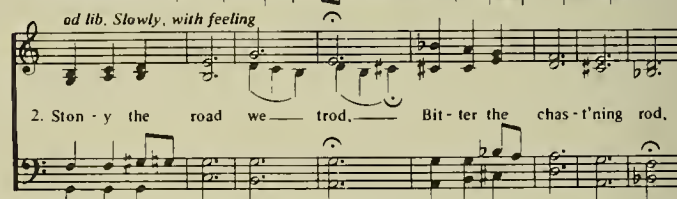
div.
Sing a song, full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought...
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we far - get Thee...



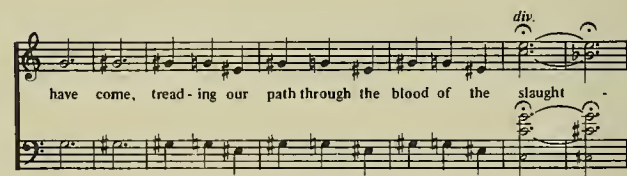
us... Fac - ing the ris - ing sun Of our new day be - gun,
Shad - owed be - neath Thy hand, May we for - ev - er stand,



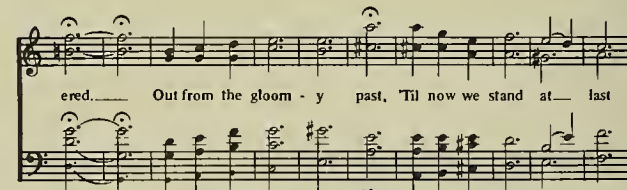
2nd time to Coda
Let us march on, til vic - to - ry is won... is won.
True to our God, true to our na - tive land...



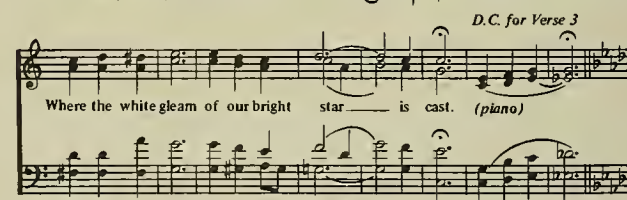
ad lib. Slowly, with feeling
2. Ston - y the road we trod, Bit - ter the chas - t'ning rod,



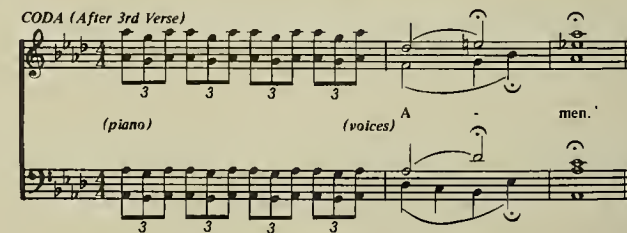
div.
have come, tread - ing our path through the blood of the slaught



ered... Out from the gloom - y past, 'Til now we stand at last



D.C. for Verse 3
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast. (piano)



CODA (After 3rd Verse)
(piano) (voices) A men.

THE COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

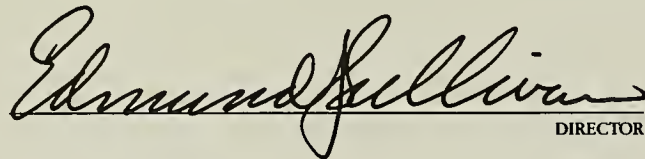
awards this
MEDALIST CERTIFICATE



to

DRUM

Given at Columbia University in the City of New York,
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DIRECTOR

A Medalist Award is granted to publications selected from the First Place ratings for special qualities evident to the judges, characterized as the personality, spirit or creative excellence of the entry. This is for overall achievement. Usually, only the top ten percent of entries receive a Medalist Award. [Taken from *Magazine Fundamentals: Third Edition*, Columbia Scholastic Press Association, 1984.]

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EDITORIAL

This issue of DRUM Magazine is a particularly special one for several reasons. The fact that this issue is in print is a miracle in itself. Thanks to letters of support from our readers, as well as to the persistent efforts of UMass students and DRUM staff, our budget, although cut, was guaranteed for two more issues. We hope that this issue, and the next 20th anniversary issue, will be so good that when the time for re-funding comes around again, we won't have to go begging.

This issue is also, unfortunately, in dedication to preservers of our culture who have passed on in the last year—James Baldwin, John Killens, Harold Washington, Romare Bearden, Channing Phillips, Peter Tosh—people who, during their lifetimes, made significant contributions to the struggle against injustice that Blacks and other people of color continue to face. It seemed that just as we were getting over the shock and sorrow of one loss, we had to endure yet another. It is still hard to believe that James Baldwin—a man who was literally the voice of Black America—is no longer alive. *But the brilliance of their legacies shines on.*

During this period of seemingly endless and highly discriminating fatality, the very valid questions of "Who's next?" and "Who will be left?" were asked. The urgency of these questions is increasing as the over-present racism and conservatism in this country are no longer cloaked in subtlety but exposed anew each day through acts of legal and illegal violence. In this issue of DRUM we pay tribute to those like Marcus Garvey, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Baldwin, Bearden, and the still-living (God Bless him!) Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. We also celebrate those who have chosen to continue the struggle and who have dedicated their lives and work to the passing on of tradition and culture—the President of Spelman College, Dr. Johnnetta Cole, filmmaker Spike Lee, Professor Andrea Benton Rushing, musi-

cian Jane Sapp, the artists of Afri-Cobra and writer Chinua Achebe. It is from all of these people, and many more like them, that we draw strength.

Along with the question, "Who will be left?" comes another—"Are those who come next prepared?" Although the last couple of years have shown that many of us are willing to fight against injustice—as the article on the recent New Africa House takeover illustrates—I think that our preparation is lacking, especially given the nature of the current struggle. The struggles of the 60s and 70s—which are, to many of us, ahistorical—were relatively easier to fight because inequality was more identifiable. Today, however, racism is much less evident and much more institutionalized. Many Americans—Black and white—believe that because some have been given the opportunity for better education, employment and housing, all can attain these same goals—if one works hard enough. But it's not just about opportunity. "One of the striking challenges that your age has to face is the fact that freedom without equality is not enough. Freedom didn't cost very much. Equality does. Because in freedom, you simply have the option to push from out to in and from in to out. But with equality it's about moving up. It's about equity and parity, as opposed to welfare and charity You are of the equality generation . . . at least you have the opportunity to be about that." [The Rev. Jesse Jackson]

Many of us grew up not having to ride on the back of the bus, or to fight and die for the right to vote, so maybe we think that acts of injustice today are isolated incidents that can be solved on an individual basis, but this is one of America's greatest fantasies. Racism and inequality are inherent in the foundation of America—a fact cleverly veiled in the disguise of rhetoric. The founding fathers of this country were not advocates of "freedom and justice for all,"—they were murderers and enslavers.

All men are created equal, indeed.

Therein, however, does not lie the tragedy. The tragedy lies in our belief and indisputability of this myth. Our bodies may no longer be in bondage, but our minds certainly are. The nature of the struggle has changed and we have to prepare ourselves. *The price of liberation is eternal vigilance.* We have to free ourselves from the mind-imprisoning chains which hinder us from moving up and continuing the incomplete struggle against oppression. It is not enough for the individual to go to school, get a job and make money. If we were to wait for each person of color to attain equality and security in this country, we would be waiting forever because the cycle of oppression does not end. We need to rock the foundation and expel the myths.

These chains which bind us are much more destructive than those which shackled the bodies of our ancestors, and much more incapacitating, because of their relative insidiousness. Like fighting an invisible opponent—one keeps swinging in hopes of landing an effective blow. But we can't afford to fight with our eyes closed. New chains are being forged and they will continue to be further obscured if we don't open our eyes and wake up from this sleep which, if continued, will once again make life a living nightmare for people of color in this country and in this world.

While the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There isn't any other tale to tell, it's the only light we've got in all this darkness And this tale, according to that face, that body, those strong hands on those strings, has another aspect in every country, and a new depth in every generation. [James Baldwin]

—Martha Grier-Deen

JAMES THE FIRE

The only thing white people have that black people, need, or should want, is power—and no one holds power forever. White people cannot, in the generality, be taken as models of how to live. Rather, the white man is himself in sore need of new standards, which will release him from his confusion and place him once again in fruitful communion with the depths of his own being. And I repeat: The price of liberation of the white people is the liberation of the blacks—the total liberation, in the cities, in the towns, before the law, and in the mind. Why for example—especially knowing the family as I do—I should want to marry your sister is a great mystery to me. But your sister and I have every right to marry if we wish to, and no one has the right to stop us. If she cannot raise me to her level, perhaps I can raise her to mine.

Color is not a human or personal reality; it is a political reality. But this is a distinction so extremely hard to make that the West has not been able to make it yet. And at the center of this dreadful storm, this vast confusion, stand the black people of this nation, who must now share the fate of a nation that has never accepted them, to which they were brought in chains. Well, if this is so, one has no choice but to do all in one's power to change that fate, and at no matter what risk—eviction, imprisonment, torture, death. For the sake of one's children, in order to minimize the bill that they must pay, one must be careful not to take refuge in any delusion—and the value placed on the color of the skin is always and everywhere and forever a delusion.

BALDWIN NEXT TIME

If one is continually surviving the worst that life can bring, one eventually ceases to be controlled by a fear of what life can bring; whatever it brings must be borne. And at this level of experience one's bitterness begins to be palatable, and hatred becomes too heavy a sack to carry . . . It takes great spiritual resilience not to hate the hater whose foot is on your neck, and an even greater miracle of perception and charity not to teach your child to hate.

The American Negro has the great advantage of having never believed that collection of myths to which white Americans cling: that their ancestors were all freedom-loving heroes, that they were born in the greatest country the world has ever seen, or that Americans are invincible in battle and wise in peace, that Americans have always dealt honorably with Mexicans and Indians and all other neighbors or inferiors, that American men are the world's most direct and virile, that American women are pure.

If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world. If we do not now dare everything, the fulfillment of that prophecy, re-created from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us: God gave Noah the rainbow sign, No more water, the fire next time!



JAMES BALDWIN AND GORDON PARKS

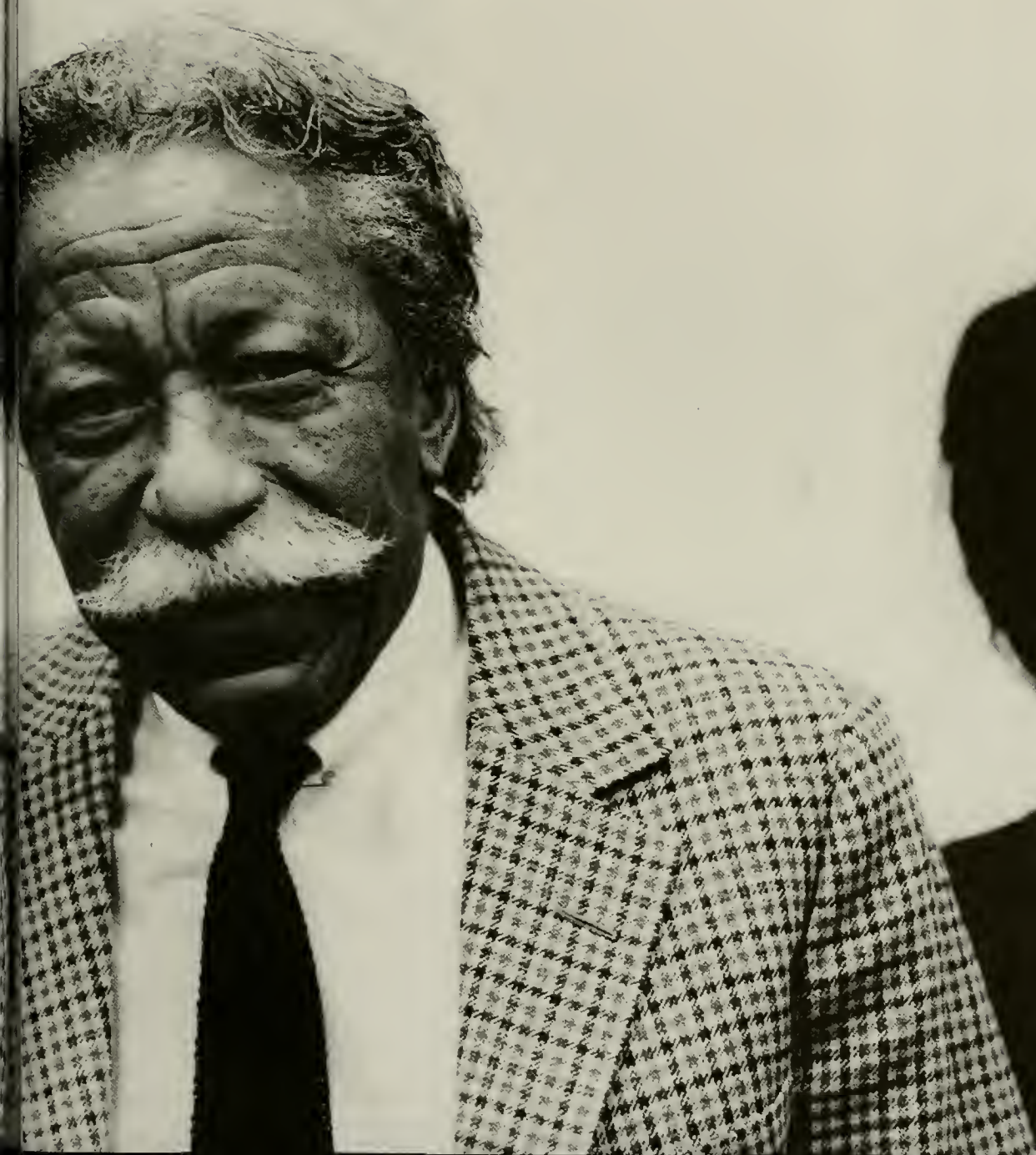


Photo by Adger Cowans

MARCUS GARVEY: THE UNSUNG HERO

A study of Marcus Garvey is at its best, enlightening, and at its worst, frustrating. He was perhaps the most underplayed of our historical Black leaders and yet he should be the most praised, for even if one is in disagreement with Garvey's ideas and views, he was the foremost inspiration for the modern Civil Rights Movement that Black Americans hold in such high regard. He inspired Black society and the Black world as no leader has since, with his freeing hand having reached into colonized Africa, as well as the America in bondage. Garvey knew no boundaries when it came to the enslaved. What began as plans only for his Jamaican brothers and sisters, inspired by the activities of Booker T. Washington, ended with a worldwide movement from which white society has yet to recover.

The name Marcus Garvey, to the few who know more than his name, is synonymous with the ideas of Black power and Black nationalism. He was the advocate of a Black nation long before Malcolm X.

Garvey is irreplaceable in the history of Blacks in America because he did more to raise the consciousness of his people than any other leader. Further study of the man, and the movement that resulted, explains in clear terms the belief after which a large majority of Black society modeled their thinking. What came to be known to the world as "Garveyism" was a force that could not be ignored.

Garvey's experience with racial oppression began in early childhood—born in the small town of St. Ann's Bay on the northern coast of Jamaica on August 17, 1887, into a society where division by color dictated the division of class. As a child his parents were financially stable and the area in which they lived provided him with the opportunity to interact with white neighbors; hence, he had an early education about the injustices of life. He was genuinely awakened to the existence of racism when the little white girl next door with whom he frequently played told him that she could no longer speak to or play with him because he was a "nigger." [Cronon, 8] Garvey expressed his rite of passage best when he said, "it was then that I found for the first time that there was some difference in humanity, and that there were different races, each having its own separate and distinct social life."

Unsettled by this first incident, as he grew older he continued to be disgusted and frustrated by the treatment of Black people in the places that he visited, but most especially by the treatment they received at home. On his visits to Costa Rica and to Panama, he saw how unjustly his Jamaican brothers and sisters in the fields and on the canal were dealt with. The social caste system which existed in Jamaica—where dark-skinned Blacks were the lower class, the light-skinned or "mulattos" comprised the middle class, and the white minority made the upper class—would prepare him for his eventual trip to the United States. Here he would have to combat the same lack of self-pride that Jamaican Blacks felt due to color-prejudice. However, in the U.S., the persecution was primarily on the part of white society, even though a strong undertone of color-casting existed within the Black community itself. Garvey essentially grew to despise miscegenation of any form. "We are conscious of the fact that slavery brought upon us the curse of many colors within our race but that is no reason why we ourselves should perpetuate the evil." [Martin, 29]

In 1912, Garvey went to London to experience the treatment of Blacks outside of Jamaica and was introduced to a copy of Booker T. Washington's autobiography *Up From Slavery*. From that time forward Garvey wondered where the Black leadership was and resolved to try to provide the guidance that was needed.

Having read Booker T's novel while in London, Garvey returned to Jamaica on August 1, 1914 with plans to unify his people. It was at this time that he formed the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities League. [Cronon, 16] This eventually was shortened to the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)—whose purpose was to unite the oppressed Blacks of the world in a collective struggle for Black power. The UNIA constitution stated that the organization would be dedicated to the idea of "universal brotherhood and would continually work towards the uplifting of the Negro peoples of the world." [Cronon, 17]



Marcus Garvey at 19

Garvey wanted to establish a trade school in Jamaica modeled after Washington's Tuskegee Institute. Realizing that he had neither the funds nor the manpower to fulfill his plans he decided to solicit help from the United States. Knowing Washington had acquired large amounts of money for Tuskegee he wrote to him asking for his backing. Just as his plans for arrival in the U.S. were finalized his expected host died, but Garvey came to the U.S. anyway. When he arrived, he discovered that the African-American was in such a position of hopelessness after World War I that they warranted new leadership. Seizing the opportunity Garvey stepped in: "Where is the black



Convention parade in Harlem.

man's government? Where is his king and his kingdom? Where is his President, his country and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs? I could not find them and then I declared, I will help to make them." [Cronon, 16]

After being unable to talk to even Washington's aide, Garvey quickly toured the United States and assessed the racial and political climate. He decided that there was a definite need for a New York branch of the UNIA. He had come to Harlem at a time when Blacks were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their position in society. Many had migrated from the South to the North in search of better economic conditions in

"the promised land." What they found when they arrived was that they were *still* the last hired and first fired. It was into this atmosphere of unrest that Marcus Garvey stepped.

Garvey first focused much of his attention on the West Indian population of Harlem but was soon speaking to the masses of Blacks. He spoke about freedom, independence and an independent nation. He also alluded to the possibility of a Black owned and operated steamship line to carry freight, mail and people back and forth to Africa.

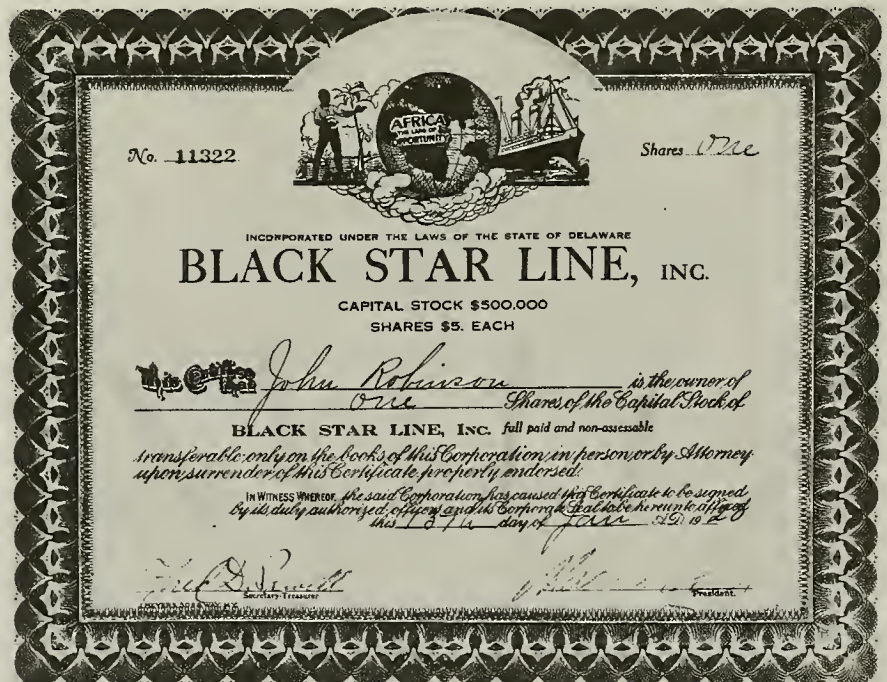
Garvey had brought the UNIA to New York in 1917 and by 1919 he could boast that there were thirty chapters with two million members. [Vincent, 101] It was with this strength that the idea of the Black Star Line was made a reality. The line met with much approval and was immensely popular because it gave even the poorest Black a chance to own stock. The investor could feel as if he was promoting the betterment of his race while also making some money. [Cronon, 51]

Commercially and economically, the Black Star Line was a failure. Its first and only real or legitimate purchase was of the *Yarmouth* for which an exorbitant sum was paid. This purchase, for 165 thousand dollars, would set a pattern. During the next few years the company repeatedly purchased over-priced items which left the company with no money to outfit ships, and eventually the line went bankrupt. [Vincent, 103] The cause of the Line's failure was largely due to hounding by government agents, coupled with the fact that most of the stockholders had invested because of Garvey's plans for emigration back to Africa.

The Black Star Line was probably most effective as a propaganda tool. [Stein, 156] Because the idea was so appealing to the Black community, Garvey spoke about it whenever he could to improve membership. The flashy parades that accompanied the voyages also brought attention and increased enrollment. Although it didn't successfully accomplish its designed purpose, the Black Star Line boosted membership of the UNIA, as well as the morale of the people. Furthermore, those who held stock in the Black Star Line really believed they were contributing to a big business, and the Factories Company inspired many Blacks to become small business owners. Independence breeds power and pride.

Concerned about Black youth, Garvey began the Negro Factories Company. With its establishment, he believed he was assuring them profitable, steady employment. [Cronon, 60] Through this company, stores and other private businesses were opened and many Blacks were inspired to begin setting up their own businesses. Once again, though Garvey may not have made exceptional financial gains but he did succeed in helping the Black man gain a sense of self-respect.

In 1920, Garvey announced that there would be a mammoth international convention, with delegates representing the entire Black race who would report on conditions in their communities and establish a Negro Declaration of Rights to be presented to the governments of the world. [Cronon, 62] The conference was immensely successful and marked the highlight of the Garvey Movement. Followers came from as far as Africa for



Black Star Line Stock Certificate:

The Black Star Line was an international shipping corporation that fostered black trade, transported passengers and served as a symbol of black enterprise. Begun in 1919, it immediately became the major tool of Universal Negro Improvement Association recruiters who sold its stock.

ADDRESS REPLY TO
"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL"
AND REFER TO
INITIALS AND NUMBER

NRH-GPO

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

October 11, 1919.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. RIDGELY.

I am transmitting herewith a communication which has come to my attention from the Panama Canal, Washington office, relative to the activities of MARCUS GARVEY. Garvey is a West-Indian negro and in addition to his activities in endeavoring to establish the Black Star Line Steamship Corporation he has also been particularly active among the radical elements in New York City in agitating the negro movement. Unfortunately, however, he has not as yet violated any federal law whereby he could be proceeded against on the grounds of being an undesirable alien, from the point of view of deportation. It occurs to me, however, from the attached clipping that there might be some proceeding against him for fraud in connection with his Black Star Line propaganda and for this reason I am transmitting the communication to you for your appropriate attention.

The following is a brief statement of Marcus Garvey and his activities:

Subject a native of the West Indies and one of the most prominent negro agitators in New York;

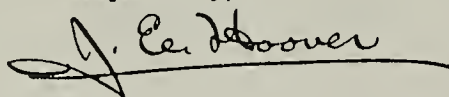
He is a founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League;

He is the promulgator of the Black Star Line and is the managing editor of the *Negro World*;

He is an exceptionally fine orator, creating much excitement among the negroes through his steamship proposition;

In his paper the "*Negro World*" the Soviet Russian Rule is upheld and there is open advocacy of Bolshevism.

Respectfully,



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the month-long convention. "Cutting across national lines and banishing national allegiances, the racial doctrines of Marcus Garvey were infusing in Negroes everywhere a strong sense of pride in being black." [Cronon, 70]

The Black Star Line, the Negro Factories Co., and the conference of 1920 were the major accomplishments of a decade of enlightenment that came with Marcus Garvey. All, of course, met with opposition from the white community and, more often than not, from members of the Black community as well. In 1919 the District Attorney's office in New York threatened Garvey twice with charges of fraud. [Vincent, 103] The Negro press, although complimentary of Garvey's newspaper, *The Negro World*, was critical of Garvey himself throughout the movement. This was due in part to their opposing integrationist-separatist ideologies. Garvey also felt that the Black press was solely out to better its condition and was unconcerned for the welfare of the people—ideals which Garvey considered venal and ignorant.

"Unfortunately the Colored or Negro Press of today falls into the hands of unprincipled, unscrupulous and characterless individuals whose highest aims are to enrich themselves and to find political berths for themselves and their friends, or rather confederates." [Garvey, 77]

In 1925, with the help of a disgruntled ex-employee of the UNIA, the District Attorney arrested Garvey and two colleagues on charges of mail fraud. J. Edgar Hoover, who was now head of the new General Intelligence Division, had had Garvey watched for months in hopes of finding him guilty of a deportable offense. [Stein, 191] Garvey was sentenced to five years of imprisonment, but served only three. During Garvey's incarceration, Blacks began to realize the injustice and viciousness of the whites who sentenced him for a crime that was usually punishable by probation.

At this time the Black press, his lifelong adversary, felt that he had been punished sufficiently, and began to find some truth in Garvey's ideology of Black nationalism. [Cronon, 141] Instead of hindering Garvey's strength and popularity as a leader, the plan of Hoover and the government actually backfired and provided Garvey with even more support.

During his last year in prison in 1927, the UNIA was no longer strong enough to establish programs on its own, so Garvey instructed the leadership to work along with other organizations. Prejudices within the UNIA, added to outside pressures, caused disunity within the organization.

Garvey's influence did not disappear after he was deported in 1927. Although he could not restore the UNIA to its former strength, due to the demise of the Black Star Line and the resistance of African governments to the emigration plan, the dream of the UNIA becoming a world power was kept alive by using the Jamaican chapter as a base. Letters of inspiration, which were to be printed in *The Negro World*, were cabled to the United States. He continued to work with the organization until his death in 1940.

"The legacy of Garvey and his followers goes beyond the many programs they initiated. Garvey and many of his leading lieutenants were masters of psychological warfare. Garvey tried to restore to the black man the masculinity stolen from him during the centuries of slavery." [Vincent, 19]

Garveyism, like its founder, advocated Black power, freedom, unity and a return to the motherland to make it a powerful Black nation. Garvey's critics said that he won his followers by emotion-laden pleas that had no realism behind them, however, this was not the case. [Vincent, 28] Garvey was an opportunist who loved his people. He came to them at a time when leadership and guidance was lacking, when the injustices they were suffering encouraged the militancy in them to speak out. The "New Negro" wanted to fight for what he believed should rightfully be his. But, the "New Negro" still suffered the same self-esteem problems that the "Old Negro" had. Marcus Garvey's restoration of a sense of Black pride in his people earned him the distinction of leader. "Garvey's vision for his race's redemption was of a new world of black men, not peons, serfs, dogs and slaves, but a nation of sturdy men making their impression upon civilization and causing a new light to dawn upon the human race." [Cronon, 16]

Garveyism, in its quest for a strong Black nation, has led many to believe that he advocated a total emigration to the motherland. On the contrary, Garvey wanted his people to work and establish themselves in the United States while a small number traveled to Africa to help the continent regain her freedom; from that he expected Blacks everywhere to gain prestige and strength. [Martin, 45]

Marcus Garvey was only directly involved with American society for a decade, but his presence can still be felt. The existence of the red, black and green flags that represent Black nationalism, and the current stances of emigration back to Africa are testament to the survival of Garvey's message.

Garvey was popular and respected because, although largely self-educated, he was a great orator and expressed the thoughts of the Black community that

might otherwise have been kept a secret. [Cronon, 4] Although his methods may not have been traditional in the context of what many see as the proper methods of leading a people, all his concepts of unity and brotherhood were based upon the realities of living in a segregationist society. He sought to uplift the people and instill in them the pride of being Black, independent and therefore separate from white society.

It has often been deduced by critics and the uninformed that Garveyism was largely unsuccessful because although he had grasped the ears of the nation, much of what he said was in opposition to the true desires of the Black person.

The African-American had just recently come out of a position of slavery and was seeking to establish rights in a place where formerly they had had none. Blacks wanted to be successful in the society in which they lived and didn't want to run from it.

"The inherent weaknesses of Garveyism itself also acted to limit his ultimate influence. Garvey sought to raise high the wall of racial nationalism at a time when most thoughtful men were seeking to tear down these barriers . . . Garveyism failed largely because it was unable to come up with suitable alternatives to the unsatisfactory conditions of American life as they affect the Negro. Escape, either emotional or physical was neither realistic, lasting or desired." [Cronon, 221, 224]

Perhaps if Garvey were a leader of today he would find an attitude on the part of Black Americans more conducive to his desires, although it is difficult to determine what the current attitude would be if Garvey had never existed.

Whatever Garvey's contributions would have been in the 1990s, the man must be given credit for reestablishing what is the key to any successful movement of a people then or now: Black Pride.

"When you tell this Black man in America who he is, where he came from, what he had when he was there, he'll look around and ask himself, 'Well what happened to it, who took it away from us and how did they do it?' Why, brothers, you'll have some action just like that . . . that knowledge in itself will usher in your action program." —Malcolm X

Simone Nicholson is a sophomore Journalism major.



Marcus Garvey at 1921 convention parade in Harlem.

Nelson Mandela



Native Land...Africa

by Dawn Marshall

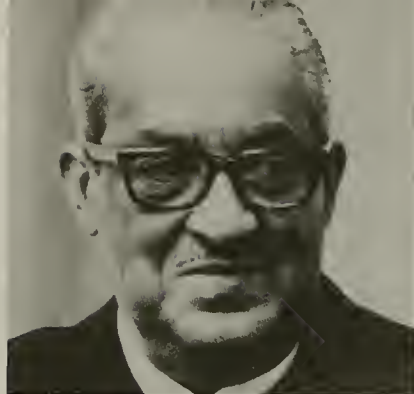
Why? Why?
Thousands and thousands
miles apart
Our Native Land...
Africa, the second largest continent.

Our traditional customs are taken
away from us
Our colorful dashikis and turbans
Why? Why?
Our Native Land...
Africa, the most colorful country.

Our music, beating heavenly on the
bamboo drums.
Watching our Brothers and Sisters
dancing lively with rhythm
Our Native Land...
Africa, the origin of soul and Black Music.

Blood-in-Blood families, together
Chief of tribes, in many villages
Mud and Huts, our shelter
People of color, our people, Africans.

Why? Why?
Did the white men take our place away from us?
Why? Why?
Were they so cruel?
Why? Why?
Are we Brothers and Sisters, thousands and thousands
miles apart,
Our Native Land...
Africa, oh so far away.



Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall

Thurgood Marshall was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 2, 1908, the younger of two sons born to William Canfield and Norma A. Marshall.

The Marshalls taught their children to be proud of their ancestry, which they traced to a Congolese slave who was known as a troublemaker. According to Marshall, the fellow made his objections to slavery so well known that his master had to release him from bondage.

Marshall's parents were intelligent and strongly opposed to segregation. Marshall's father was a dining-room steward and his mother was an elementary school teacher.

Young Thurgood, on the urging of his mother, made an attempt to study dentistry during his first couple of years at college; however, the dentistry field failed to hold his interest. It was his father who eventually turned his interest toward the legal profession. He was taught by his father to always challenge and prove theories because, in his father's view, "nothing should be taken for granted."

Thurgood, as a young boy, was forced to endure what all other Blacks were enduring: racism and bigotry.

Thurgood's father was convinced that shiftlessness was a direct cause of crime and poverty and that recklessness could be acquired at any time. As a result of this belief, Thurgood was sent to the school where his mother taught so she could maintain surveillance over him. After elementary and high school, Thurgood applied and was accepted to Lincoln University. He would always find the time to read books by and for Blacks. He read works such as *The Negro in American History*, by Mortimer J. Adler, *The American Negro* by J. Melville Herskovits and the works of W.E.B. Du Bois. In his senior year at Lincoln, he was an excellent debater in the Forensic Society, and in June of 1930 he received his A.B. degree with honors in the humanities.

It was during his sophomore year that he met and married his first wife, Vivian Burney. They were married for twenty-five years—until Vivian's death due to cancer in February, 1955. She was a source of great inspiration to Thurgood. During his marriage, Thurgood worked to

finance himself, his wife, and his education.

During the 20s, Thurgood was particularly impressed by Blacks such as Paul Robeson and Florence Mills, the musical-comedy star. By this time, he had already begun to find his own identity and to slowly mature.

In 1930 he applied and was accepted to Howard University. He had applied earlier to the University of Maryland and was refused entry because he was Black. During his first year at Howard, Marshall came into contact with Dr. Charles Hamilton Houston, Vice-Dean of the Law School, who was to become Marshall's mentor. Houston taught Marshall the strategy of using existing laws to defeat racial discrimination. It was also Houston who represented the NAACP in several of its cases. Marshall did so well under Houston's tutelage that he led his class in all three years and graduated as valedictorian in 1933.

After graduating, Marshall and his second wife, Cecilia Suyat, moved back to Baltimore. His early years in Baltimore were hard and discouraging. His clients, whenever he had any, were poor—usually victims of dispossession, eviction and police brutality. He handled many of these cases, knowing that the chance of compensation would be small. Soon he became known in his community as "the little man's lawyer."

In 1934, Marshall began his long association with the NAACP when he volunteered his services to the local branch in Baltimore. Thurgood won his first NAACP case in 1935. He convinced the Maryland Court of Appeals to order the University of Maryland Law School (incidentally the same Law School that had refused to admit him five years earlier) to admit its first Black applicant.

In 1936, Charles Houston, who worked for the national office of the NAACP, convinced the organization to appoint Marshall as an Assistant Special Counsel. Three years later, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. was created. The purposes of the fund were listed in the charter: to render free legal aid to Blacks who suffer legal injustice because of their race or color and who cannot afford to employ legal assistance—

among other things—vital to the well being of Blacks, such as education.

In 1940, the position of Director-Counsel was created and Marshall was selected for the job. Marshall served in this position for twenty-one years. The majority of civil rights cases were handled by the Fund during this period, and the Director-Counsel was to a large degree responsible for its successes and failures.

According to the United States Reports, the official publication of Supreme Court decisions, Marshall argued thirty-two cases and assisted in preparing the briefs for eleven others brought before the Supreme Court. Of the cases he argued, four were lost, one was dismissed for lack of a substantial federal question, and twenty-seven were substantive victories. Marshall argued six of these cases without the support of his staff. He argued his first case before the Supreme Court in 1942 and won.

Marshall gained worldwide notoriety in May of 1954 when the Supreme Court relied solely on his sociological argument in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. The argument Marshall presented to the Court in 1952, in part, was that "legally enforced racial segregation in public schools denied benefits required by the 'equal protection of the law' clause of the 14th Amendment. Along with his very supportive staff, Marshall had broken down the walls of segregation which were supported by the case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*."

On January 10, 1961, John F. Kennedy was elected to the presidency. During his campaign Kennedy made both public and private statements that he was in favor of equal rights for Blacks. After he was elected President, Kennedy, at the urging of his brother Robert, appointed Marshall to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York.

Seven years after he was appointed to the Second Circuit Court (on October 2, 1967), Thurgood Marshall gained fame when he was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to serve as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of the United States. He is the first and only Black ever to sit on the highest court of this nation.

Ever since his 1967 appointment,

Justice Marshall has been a faithful leader in the fight for liberalism. For example, in the case of *Apodaca vs. Oregon* in 1972, when the majority held that unanimous verdicts were not required in state trials, Marshall became angry and wrote, "Today the court cuts the heart out of the two most important and inseparable safeguards the Bill of Rights offers a criminal defendant: the right to submit his case to a jury, and the right to proof beyond a reasonable doubt The skeleton of these safeguards remains, but the Court strips them of life and of meaning . . ." Marshall went on to state, "The Court asserts that when a jury votes nine to three for conviction, the doubts of the three do not impeach the verdict of the nine But we know what has hapened, the prosecutor has tried and failed to persuade those jurors of the defendant's guilt." Therefore, in this case, the prosecutor did not prove beyond a reasonable doubt.

As we celebrate the Bicentennial of the Constitution, Justice Marshall is once again at the forefront of the news. In a forum before patent lawyers in Hawaii, Justice Marshall blasted the framers of the Constitution for approving a Constitution that "was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war and momentous social transformation" before all human rights were recognized. Marshall then stated that the framers "traded moral principles for self-interest" in drafting the constitution. After Justice Marshall's statements were aired, the conservative Washington Legal Foundation invited the Honorable Justice to resign because his remarks "reflect a deep-seated bitterness and dislike that impairs his capacity."

Although the 80-year old Justice is criticized by the majority of the conservatives in Washington, he is praised by liberals such as Derrick Bell of Harvard Law School who said: "We need less pomp and more candor about why the Constitution was written the way it was and what still needs to be done to insure individual rights."

Throughout his tenure on the bench, Justice Marshall has been an unwavering voice for the poor and oppressed throughout this nation. His eternal vigilance brings African-Americans a bit closer to equality in this nation.

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Pancho Morris and Rudolph Miller are both graduating Legal Studies majors from Jamaica, and will be attending law school in the fall of 1988.

Racism

by Mark T. Childs

Still,
 racism
 rampant
 blatant, subtle
 in churches
 schools
 neighborhoods
 from infancy.
 Behind, beside
 among, ahead
 of us always.
 why
 when it hurts
 cuts
 bruises
 debilitates
 destroys
 human beauty.

How can
 we keep fighting
 to cure disease
 and prolong life
 when we can
 not
 soothe
 the deep
 festering wounds
 of bigotry.
 I don't know

Fear and ignorance
 seek a
 colored scapegoat
 before
 acknowledging
 we're all there is
 brother and sister.
 racism kills.

BOOKWORM RAPS ON LITERATURE

Andrea Benton Rushing

*Andrea Benton Rushing is a New York City-born professor of Black Studies at Amherst College who has taught in Nigeria, traveled to several Caribbean countries, published articles on African and African-American literature, and co-edited **Women in Africa and the African Diaspora** with Rosalyn Terborg-Penn and Sharon Harley. *Feminist Studies* will publish her short story 'Hair Raising' this summer.*

I got interested in literature while I was a college student. Then I read the greats in British literature: T.S. Eliot, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and John Donne.

I've been interested in literature for as long as I can remember. (I could hardly wait to get an adult library card and once I did, I read all around the Tompkins Square branch of the New York Public Library—except for books on dogs, horses, and nurses.) When I was in college I started reading poetry seriously. Though it wasn't about my day-to-day life, it fascinated me. I liked to decipher difficult poems, look up words I didn't know, puzzle out ideas I hadn't thought about. During the 1960s I was an activist in the Civil Rights Movement. Working as a community organizer in Boston, I read a lot and my reading was still Eurocentric. Great white authors; mostly men.

The Black Arts Movement opened my eyes to the wonders of African-American literature, and I started reading it in the same thorough but unsystematic way in which I'd read through the public library—James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks. The "new" Black poets really interested me: Sonia Sanchez, Nikki Giovanni, Carolyn Rodgers, Etheridge Knight, Mari Evans. Their way of writing about things I knew from personal experience, incorporating the music that is the pervasive art form in African-American culture, and seeing art as doing something to raise our people's consciousness to our problems and possible solutions made me want to soak up every copy of *Black World*, read every slim volume of poetry Broadside put out, send quotations from poems to my family and friends. The first course I ever taught was at Harvard and it was an introduction to African-American poetry. Later I branched out and taught courses

on autobiography and other genres, but poetry was where I started and poetry is still the genre that I love most.

I can no longer remember how I started reading things by African-American women. A group of friends used to meet at my house when I lived in Boston. All of us were interested in literature and either taught in Black Studies departments where we were the only women or in Women's Studies programs where we were the only people of African descent. That group is where I first heard about Toni Morrison's classic *Sula*. (I'm so glad she's gotten the Pulitzer Prize!) We talked about Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Cade Bambara, and Alice Walker, too. At the same time I was getting interested in literature from other parts of the Black world. My travels to the West Indies made me listen to poets like Derek Walcott and Edmund Kamau Braithwaite. In addition, I read African authors like Wole Soyinka, who won the Nobel Prize for literature last year. (My pan-African literary interests played catch-up with my pan-African politics . . .)

By the time I came to the Valley (1975) I had already written about images of Black women in African-American poetry and was getting increasingly interested in the ways in which women are depicted in literature by men and by women.

In 1983-84 I had the extraordinary experience of being a Fulbright fellow in Nigeria. Although I had taught African literature for many years, living in the Motherland opened my eyes about so many things. It is not just that I got to be part of some of the experiences authors like Chinua Achebe, Flora Nwapa, Armah, Ngugi and Wole Soyinka, etc. had helped me imagine, I also got to teach African students and see how differently they read things (like *Native Son*) from the way students I had taught in the U.S. And I learned immeasurably from my colleagues in the department of literature in English at the University of Ife. It's not so much that they gave different answers to literary questions than I did as that they asked different questions and introduced me to new authors.

Teaching has its rewards. You get to introduce generations of students to books which help them see themselves in a new way, help them imagine things they would otherwise consider impossible. I also taught them how to express their

ideas in writing. I love to see students who have no confidence in their ability to write learn how to say what they want—clearly and comfortably.

In some ways I'm a bookworm. I could just burrow in my study and catch up on all the reading that's gone by me in recent years—we've had bumper crops of great Black creative and critical writing. August Wilson's plays ("Fences" is the prize-winning one, but I think "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" has the widest range and deepest resonance); Mary Helen Washington's *Invented Lives* which studies Zora Neale Hurston, Dorothy West, and Ann Petry; Bernard Bell's magisterial analysis of the African-American novel; Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day*; and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. I see the challenge of writing about what I've learned and discerned in literature acting as a sort of translator between cultures of Africa and the New World, academic life and the people I meet in church, at the hairdressers, and at family reunions.

But I also want to write more fiction. That's what I hope my coming sabbatical will allow me to do—immerse myself in worlds that I make up and make them come alive on paper in ways that will speak to people's souls the way powerful books have spoken to me.

I think it's important to start our children off reading at an early age. Let them see us reading and make sure that they have books all around them, books about people who look, feel and think like them. The authors that come immediately to mind are: Lucille Clifton, Virginia Hamilton, Jack Ezra Keats, Walter Dean Myers, Eloise Greenfield, and Jan Carew. If I were trying to get someone who was shy about reading into literature, I'd probably start by having the person read a really good short story. Another way to begin is to have people see literature come alive the way it does when a play is performed or a gifted poet reads her work aloud making you laugh in recognition and shiver in amazement.

Ms. Rushing was interviewed by Garrick Amos who is a UMass student and member of the football team.

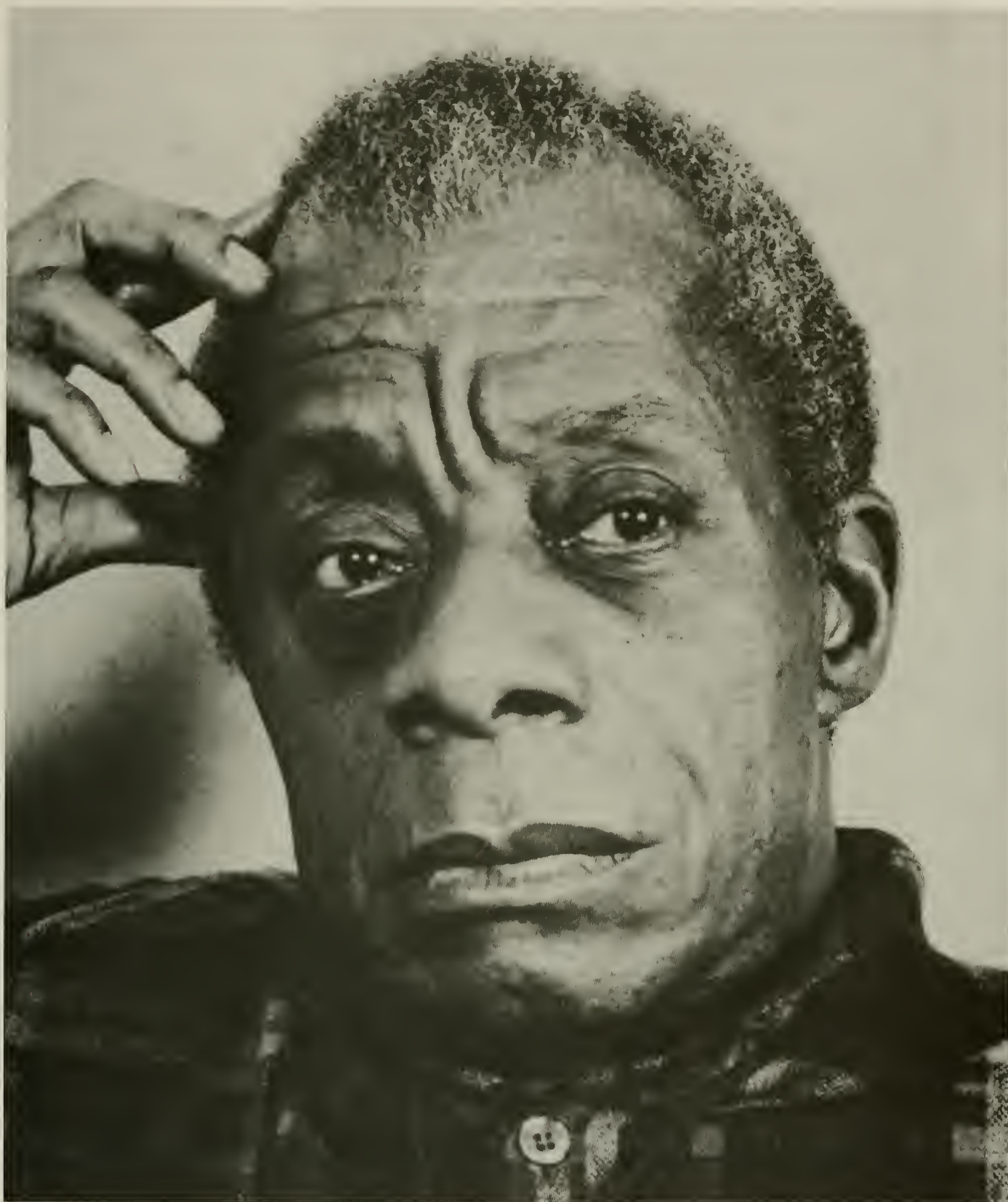


Photo by Stephen Long

**JAMES
BALDWIN**
1924-1987

THE PRICE OF THE TICKET

My soul looks back and wonders how I got over — indeed: but I find it unexpectedly difficult to remember, in detail, how I got started. I will never, for example, forget Saul Levitas, the editor of *The New Leader*, who gave me my first book review assignment sometime in 1946, nor Máry Greene, a wonderful woman, who was his man Friday: but I do not remember exactly how I met them.

I do remember how my life in Greenwich Village began — which is, essentially, how my career began — for it began when I was fifteen.

One day, a DeWitt Clinton H.S. running buddy, Emile Capouya, played hookey without me and went down to Greenwich Village and made the acquaintance of Beauford Delaney. The next day, he told me about this wonderful man he had met, a black — then, Negro, or Colored — painter and said that I must meet him: and he gave me Beauford Delaney's address.

I had a Dickensian job, after school, in a sweat shop on Canal Street, and was getting on so badly at home that I dreaded going home: and, so, sometime later, I went to 181 Greene Street, where Beauford lived then, and introduced myself.

I was terrified, once I had climbed those stairs and knocked on that door. A short, round brown man came to the door and looked at me. He had the most extraordinary eyes I'd ever seen. When he had completed his instant X-ray of my brain, lungs, liver, heart, bowels, and spinal column (while I had said, usefully, "Emile sent me") he smiled and said, "Come in," and opened the door.

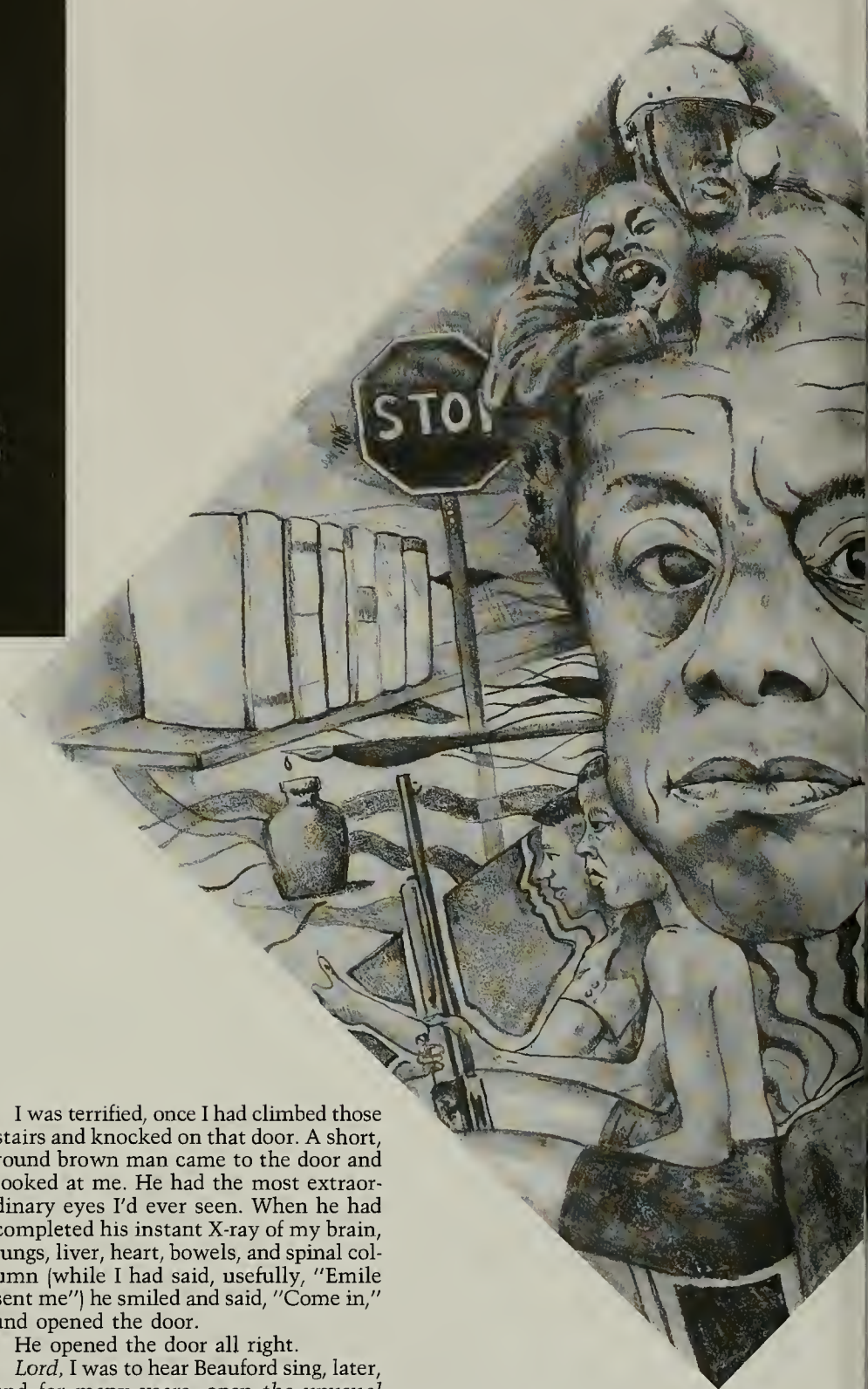
He opened the door all right.

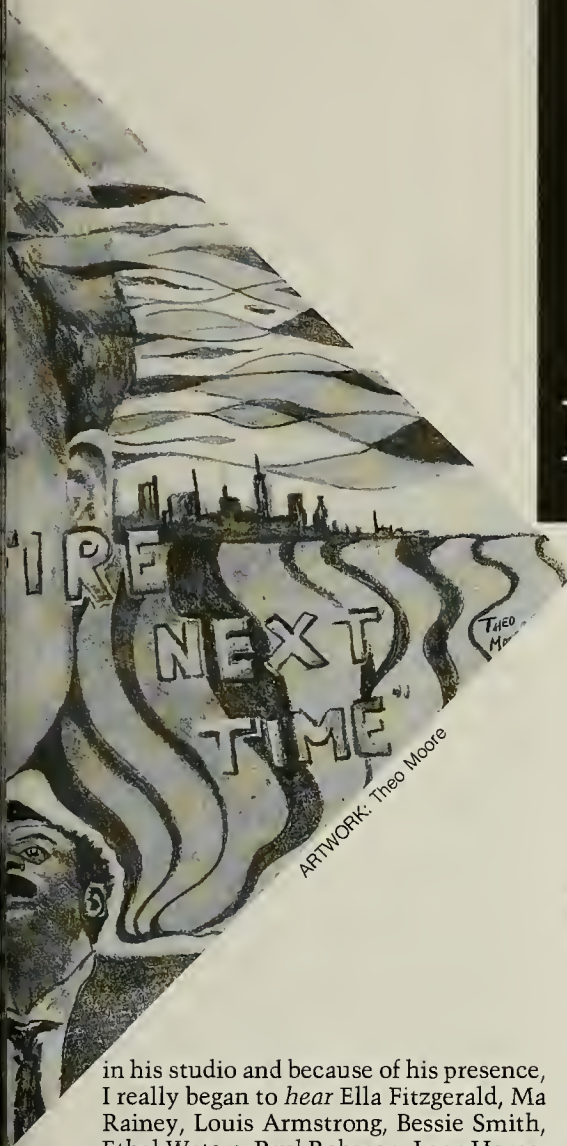
Lord, I was to hear Beauford sing, later, and for many years, *open the unusual door*. My running buddy had sent me to the right one, and not a moment too soon.

I walked through that door into Beauford's colors — on the easel, on the palette, against the wall — sometimes turned to the wall — and sometimes (in limbo?) covered by white sheets. It was a small studio (but it didn't seem small) with a black pot-bellied stove somewhere near the two windows. I remember two

windows, there may have been only one: there *was* a fire escape which Beauford, simply by his presence, had transformed, transmuted into the most exclusive terrace in Manhattan or Bombay.

I walked into music. I had grown up with music, but, now, on Beauford's small black record player, I began to hear what I had never dared or been able to hear. Beauford never gave me any lectures. But,





ARTWORK: Theo Moore

JAMES BALDWIN

in his studio and because of his presence, I really began to *hear* Ella Fitzgerald, Ma Rainey, Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Ethel Waters, Paul Robeson, Lena Horne, Fats Waller. He could inform me about Duke Ellington and W.C. Handy, and Josh White, introduce me to Frankie Newton and tell tall tales about Ethel Waters. And these people were not meant to be looked on by me as celebrities, but as a part of Beauford's life and as part of my inheritance.

I may have been with Beauford, for example, the first time I saw Paul Robeson, in concert, and in *Othello*: but I knew that he bought tickets for us — really, for me — to see and hear Miss Marian Anderson, at Carnegie Hall.

Because of her color, Miss Anderson was not allowed to sing at The Met, nor, as far as The Daughters of The American Revolution were concerned, anywhere in Washington where white people might

risk hearing her. Eleanor Roosevelt was appalled by this species of patriotism and arranged for Marian Anderson to sing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. This was a quite marvellous and passionate event in those years, triggered by the indignation of one woman who had, clearly, it seemed to me, married beneath her.

By this time, I was working for the Army — or the Yankee dollar! — in New Jersey. I hitchhiked, in sub-zero weather, out of what I will always remember as one of the lowest and most obscene circles of Hell, into Manhattan: where both Beauford and Miss Anderson were on hand to inform me that I had no right to permit myself to be defined by so pitiful a people. **Not only was I not born to be a slave: I was not born to hope to become the equal of the slave-master. They had, the masters, incontestably, the rope — in time, with enough, they would hang themselves with it.** They were not to hang me: I was to see to that. If Beauford and Miss Anderson were a part of my inheritance, I was a part of their hope.

I still remember Miss Anderson, at the end of that concert, in a kind of smoky yellow gown, her skin copper and tan, roses in the air about her, roses at her feet. Beauford painted it, an enormous paint-

ing, he fixed it in time, for me, forever, and he painted it, he said, for me.

Beauford was the first walking, living proof, for me, that a black man could be an artist. In a warmer time, a less blasphemous place, he would have been recognized as my Master and I as his Pupil. He became, for me, an example of courage and integrity, humility and passion. An absolute integrity: I saw him shaken many times and I lived to see him broken but I never saw him bow.

His example operated as an enormous protection: for the Village, then, and not only for a boy like me, was an alabaster maze perched above a boiling sea. To lose oneself in the maze was to fall into the sea. One saw it around one all the time: a famous poet of the twenties and thirties grotesquely, shamelessly, cadging drinks, another relic living in isolation on opium and champagne, someone your own age suddenly strung out or going under a subway train, people you ate with and drank with suddenly going home and blowing their brains out or turning on the gas or leaping out of the window. And, racially, the Village was vicious, partly because of the natives, largely because of the tourists, and absolutely because of the cops.

Very largely, then, because of Beauford and Connie Williams, a beautiful black lady from Trinidad who ran the restaurant in which I was a waiter, and the jazz musicians I loved and who referred to me, with a kind of exasperated affection, as "the kid," I was never entirely at the mercy of an environment at once hostile and seductive. They knew about dope, for example — I didn't: but the pusher and his product were kept far away from me. I needed love so badly that I could as easily have been hit with a needle as persuaded to share a joint of marijuana. And, in fact, Beauford and the others let me smoke with them from time to time. (But there were people they warned me *not* to smoke with.)

The only real danger with marijuana is that it can lead to rougher stuff, but this has to do with the person, not the weed. In my own case, it could hardly have become a problem, since I simply could not write if I were "high." Or, rather, I could, sometimes all night long, the greatest pages the world had ever seen, pages I tore up the moment I was able to read them.

Yet, I learned something about myself from these irredeemable horrors: something which I might not have learned had I not been forced to know that I was valued. I repeat that Beauford never gave me any lectures, but he didn't have to — he expected me to accept and respect the value placed upon me. Without this, I might very easily have become the junky which so many among those I knew were becoming then, or the Bellevue or Tombs inmate (instead of the visitor) or the Hudson River corpse which a black man I loved with all my heart was shortly to become.

Shortly: I was to meet Eugene sometime between 1943 and 1944 and "run" or "hang" with him until he hurled himself off the George Washington Bridge, in the winter of 1946. We were never lovers: for what it's worth, I think I wish we had been.

When he was dead, I remembered that he had, once, obliquely, suggested this possibility. He had run down a list of his girl friends: those he liked, those he *really* liked, one or two with whom he might really be in love, and, then, he said, "I wondered if I might be in love with you."

I wish I had heard him more clearly: an oblique confession is always a plea. But I was to hurt a great many people by being unable to imagine that anyone could possibly be in love with an ugly boy like me. To be valued is one thing, the recognition of this assessment demanding, essentially, an act of the will. But love is another matter: it is scarcely worth observing what a mockery love makes of the will. Leaving all that alone, however: when he was dead, I realized that I would have done anything whatever to have been able to hold him in this world.

Through him, anyway, my political life, insofar as I can claim, formally, to have had one, began. He was a Socialist — a member of the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL) and urged me to join, and I did. I, then, outdistanced him by becoming a Trotskyite — so that I was in the interesting position (at the age of nineteen) of being an anti-Stalinist when America and Russia were allies.

My life on the Left is of absolutely no interest. It did not last long. It was useful in that I learned that it may be impossible to indoctrinate me; also, revolutionaries tend to be sentimental and I hope that I am not. This was to lead to very serious differences between myself and Eugene, and others: but it was during this period that I met the people who were to take me to Saul Levitas, of *The New Leader*, Randall Jarrell, of *The Nation*, Elliott Cohen and Robert Warshow, of *Commentary*, and Philip Rahv, of *Partisan Review*.

These men are all dead, now, and they were all very important to my life. It is not too much to say that they helped to save my life. (As Bill Cole, at Knopf, was later to do when the editor assigned *Go Tell It On The Mountain* had me on the ropes.) And their role in my life says something arresting concerning the American dilemma, or, more precisely, perhaps, the American torment.

I had been to two black newspapers before I met these people and had simply been laughed out of the office: I was a shoeshine boy who had never been to college. I don't blame these people, God knows that I was an unlikely cub reporter: yet, I still remember how deeply I was hurt.

On the other hand, around this time, or a little later, I landed a job as messenger for New York's liberal newspaper, *PM*. It is perhaps worth pointing out that *PM* had a man of about my complexion (dark) in the tower, under whom I worked, a coal black Negro in the cellar, whom nobody ever saw, and a very fair Negro on the city desk, in the window. My career at *PM* was very nearly as devastating as my career as a civilian employee of the US Army, except that *PM* never (as far as I know) placed me on a blacklist. If the black newspapers had considered me absolutely beyond redemption, *PM* was determined to save me: I cannot tell which attitude caused me the more bitter anguish.

Therefore, though it may have cost Saul Levitas nothing to hurl a book at a black boy to see if he could read it and be articulate concerning what he had read, I took it as a vote of confidence and swore that I would give him my very best shot. And I loved him — the old man, as I sometimes called him (to his face) and I think — I know — that he was proud of me, and that he loved me, too.

It was a very great apprenticeship. Saul required a book review a week, which meant that I had to read and write all the time. He paid me ten or twenty dollars a shot: Mary Greene would sometimes coerce him into giving me a bonus. Then he would stare at her, as though he could not believe that she, his helper, could be capable of such base treachery and look at me more tragically than Julius Caesar looked at Brutus and sigh — and give me another five or ten dollars.

As for the books I reviewed — well, no one, I suppose, will ever read them again. It was after the war, and the Americans were on one of their monotonous conscience "trips": be kind to niggers, for Christ's sake, be kind to Jews! A high, or turning point of some kind was reached when I reviewed Ross Lockridge's sunlit and fabulously successful *Raintree County*. The review was turned in and the author committed suicide before the review was printed. I was very disagreeably shaken by this, and Saul asked me to write a postscript — which I did. That same week I met the late Dwight MacDonald, whom I admired very much because of his magazine, *Politics*, who looked at me with wonder and said that I was "very smart." This pleased me, certainly, but it frightened me more.

But no black editor could or would have been able to give me my head, as Saul did then: partly because he would not have had the power, partly because he could not have afforded — or needed — Saul's politics, and partly because part of the price of the black ticket is involved — fatally — with the dream of becoming white.

This is not possible, partly because white people are not white: part of the

price of the white ticket is to delude themselves into believing that they are. The political position of *my old man*, for example, whether or not he knew it, was dictated by his (in his case) very honorable necessity not to break faith with the Old World. One may add, in passing, that the Old World, or Europe, has become nothing less than an American superstition, which accounts, if anything can, for an American vision of Russia so Talmudic and self-serving that it has absolutely nothing to do with any reality occurring under the sun.

But the black American must find a way to keep faith with, and to excavate, a reality much older than Europe. Europe has never been, and cannot be, a useful or valid touchstone for the American experience because America is not, and never can be, white.

My father died before Eugene died. When my father died, Beauford helped me to bury him and I then moved from Harlem to the Village.

This was in 1943. We were fighting the Second World War.

We: who was this we?

For this war was being fought, as far as I could tell, to bring freedom to everyone with the exception of Hagar's children and the "yellow-bellied Japs."

This was not a matter, merely, of my postadolescent discernment. It had been made absolutely clear to me by the eighteen months or so that I had been working for the Army, in New Jersey, by the anti-Japanese posters to be found, then, all over New York, and by the internment of the Japanese.

At the same time, one was expected to be "patriotic" and pledge allegiance to a flag which had pledged no allegiance to you: it risked becoming your shroud if you didn't know how to keep your distance and stay in your "place."

And all of this was to come back to me much later, when Cassius Clay, a.k.a. Muhammad Ali, refused to serve in Vietnam because he was a Muslim — in other words, for religious reasons — and was stripped of his title, while placards all over New York trumpeted, *Be true to your faith!*

I have never been able to convey the confusion and horror and heartbreak and contempt which every black person I then knew felt. Oh, we dissembled and smiled as we groaned and cursed and did our duty. (And we *did* our duty.) The romance of treason never occurred to us for the brutally simple reason that you can't betray a country you don't have. (Think about it.) Treason draws its energy from the conscious, deliberate betrayal of a trust — as we were not trusted, we could not betray. And we did not wish to be traitors. We wished to be citizens.

We: the black people of this country, then, with particular emphasis on those serving in the Armed Forces. The way

blacks were treated in, and by, an American Army spreading freedom around the globe was the reason for the heartbreak and contempt. Daddy's youngest son, by his first marriage, came home, on furlough, to help with the funeral. When these young men came home, in uniform, they started talking; and one sometimes trembled, for their sanity and for one's own. One trembled, too, at another depth, another incoherence, when one wondered — as one could not fail to wonder — what *nation* they represented. My brother, describing his life in uniform, did not seem to be representing the America his uniform was meant to represent — : he had never seen the America his uniform was meant to represent. Had anyone? Did he know, had he met, anyone who had? Did anyone *live* there? Judging from the great gulf fixed between their conduct and their principles, it seemed unlikely.

Was it worth his life?

For he, certainly, on the other hand, represented something much larger than himself and something in him knew it: otherwise, he would have been broken like a match-stick and lost or have surrendered the power of speech. *A nation within a nation*: this thought wavered in my mind, I think, all those years ago, but I did not know what to make of it, it frightened me.

We: my family, the living and the dead, and the children coming along behind us. This was a complex matter, for I was not living with my family in Harlem, after all, but "down-town," in the "white world," in alien and mainly hostile territory. On the other hand, for me, then, Harlem was almost as alien and in a yet more intimidating way and risked being equally hostile, although for very different reasons. This truth cost me something in guilt and confusion, but it was the truth. It had something to do with my being the son of an evangelist and having been a child evangelist, but this is not all there was to it — that is, guilt is not all there was to it.

The fact that this particular child had been born when and where he was born had dictated certain expectations. The child does not really know what these expectations are — does not know how real they are — until he begins to fail, challenge, or defeat them. When it was clear, for example, that the pulpit, where I had made so promising a beginning, would not be my career, it was hoped that I would go on to college. This was never a very realistic hope and — perhaps because I knew this — I don't seem to have felt very strongly about it. In any case, this hope was dashed by the death of my father.

Once I had left the pulpit, I had abandoned or betrayed my role in the community — indeed, my departure from the pulpit and my leaving home were almost



Photo by Roy Lewis

simultaneous. (I had abandoned the ministry in order not to betray myself by betraying the ministry.)

Once it became clear that I was not going to go to college, I became a kind of two-headed monstrosity of a problem. Without a college education, I could, clearly, never hope to become a writer: would never acquire the skills which would enable me to conquer what was thought of as an all-white world. This meant that I would become a half-educated handyman, a vociferous, bitter ruin, spouting Shakespeare in the bars on Saturday night and sleeping if off on Sunday.

I could see this, too. I saw it all around me. There are few things more dreadful than dealing with a man who knows that he is going under, in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others. Nothing can help that man. What is left of that man flees from what is left of human attention.

I fled. I didn't want my Mama, or the kids, to see me like that.

And if all this seems, now, ridiculous and theatrical apprehension on the part of a nineteen-year-old boy, I can say only that it didn't seem remotely ridiculous then. A black person in this democracy is certain to endure the unspeakable and the unimaginable in nineteen years. It is far from an exaggeration to state that many, and by the deliberate will and action of the Republic, are ruined by that time.

White Americans cannot, in the generality, hear this, anymore than their European ancestors, and contemporaries, could, or can. If I say that my best friend, black, Eugene, who took his life at the age of twenty-four, had been, until that moment, a survivor, I will be told that he had "personal" problems. Indeed he did, and one of them was trying to find a job, or a place to live, in New York. If I point out that there is certainly a connection between his death (when I was twenty-two) and my departure for Paris (when I was

twenty-four) I will be condemned as theatrical.

But I am really saying something very simple. The will of the people, or the State, is revealed by the State's institutions. There was not, then, nor is there, now, a single American institution which is not a racist institution. And racist institutions — the unions, for one example, the Church, for another, and the Army — or the military — for yet another, are meant to keep the nigger in his place. Yes: we have lived through avalanches of tokens and concessions but white power remains white. And what it appears to surrender with one hand it obsessively clutches in the other.

I know that this is considered to be heresy. **Spare me, for Christ's and His Father's sake, any further examples of American white progress. When one examines the use of this word in this most particular context, it translates as meaning that those people who have opted for being white congratulate themselves on their generous ability to return to the slave that freedom which they never had any right to endanger, much less take away.** For this dubious effort, and still more dubious achievement, they congratulate themselves and expect to be congratulated — : in the coin, furthermore, of black gratitude, gratitude not only that my burden is — (slowly, but it takes time) being made lighter but my joy that white people are improving.

My black burden has not, however, been made lighter in the sixty years since my birth or the nearly forty years since the first essay in this collection was published and my joy, therefore, as concerns the immense strides made by white people is, to say the least, restrained.

Leaving aside my friends, the people I love, who cannot, usefully, be described as either black or white, they are, like life itself, thank God, many many colors, I do not feel, alas, that my country has any reason for self-congratulation.

If I were still in the pulpit which some people (and they may be right) claim I never left, I would counsel my countrymen to the self-confrontation of prayer, the cleansing breaking of the heart which precedes atonement. This is, of course, impossible. Multitudes are capable of many things, but atonement is not one of them.

A multitude is, I suppose, by definition, an anonymous group of people bound or driven together by fears (I wrote "tears") and hopes and needs which no individual member could face or articulate alone.

On the one hand, for example, mass conversions are notoriously transitory: within days, the reformed — "saved" — whore, whoremonger, thief, drunkard, have ventilated their fears and dried their tears and returned to their former ways. Nor do the quite spectacularly repentant "born again" of the present hour give up this world to follow Jesus. No, they take Jesus with them into the marketplace where He is used as proof of their acumen and as their Real Estate Broker, now, and, as it were, forever.

But it does not demand a mass conversion to persuade a mob to lynch a nigger or stone a Jew or mutilate a sexual heretic. It demands no conversion at all: in the very same way that the act demands no courage at all. That not one member of the mob could or would accomplish the deed alone is not merely, I think, due to physical cowardice but to cowardice of another order. To destroy a nigger, a kike, a dyke, or a faggot, by one's own act alone is to have committed a communion and, above all, to have made a public confession more personal, more total, and more devastating than any act of love: whereas the orgasm of the mob is drenched in the blood of the lamb.

A mob is not autonomous: it executes the real will of the people who rule the State. The slaughter in Birmingham, Alabama, for example, was not, merely, the action of a mob. That blood is on the hands of the state of Alabama: which sent those mobs into the streets to execute the will of the State. And, though I know that it has now become inconvenient and impolite to speak of the American Jew in the same breath with which one speaks of the American black (*I hate to say I told you so*, sings the right righteous Reverend Ray Charles, *but: I told you so*), I yet contend that the mobs in the streets of Hitler's Germany were in those streets not only by the will of the German State, but by the will of the western world, including those architects of human freedom, the British, and the presumed guardian of Christian and human morality, the Pope. The American Jew, if I may say so — and I say so with love, whether or not you believe me — makes the error of believing that his Holocaust ends in the New World, where mine begins. My diaspora continues, the end is not in sight, and I

certainly cannot depend on the morality of this panic-stricken consumer society to bring me out of — : Egypt.

A mob cannot afford to doubt: that the Jews killed Christ or that niggers want to rape their sisters or that anyone who fails to make it in the land of the free and the home of the brave deserves to be wretched. But these ideas do not come from the mob. They come from the state, which creates and manipulates the mob. The idea of black persons as property, for example, does not come from the mob. It is not a spontaneous idea. It does not come from the people, who knew better, who thought nothing of intermarriage until they were penalized for it: this idea comes from the architects of the American State. These architects decided that the concept of Property was more important — more real — than the possibilities of the human being.

In the church I come from — which is not at all the same church to which white Americans belong — we were counselled, from time to time, to do our first works over. Though the church I come from and the church to which most white Americans belong are both Christian churches, their relationship — due to those pragmatic decisions concerning Property made by a Christian State sometime ago — cannot be said to involve, or suggest, the fellowship of Christians. We do not, therefore, share the same hope or speak the same language.

To do your first works over means to reexamine everything. Go back to where you started, or as far back as you can, examine all of it, travel your road again and tell the truth about it. Sing or shout or testify or keep it to yourself: but *know whence you came*.

This is precisely what the generality of white Americans cannot afford to do. They do not know how to do it — : as I must suppose. They come through Ellis Island, where *Giorgio* becomes *Joe*, *Pappavasiliu* becomes *Palmer*, *Evangelos* becomes *Evans*, *Goldsmith* becomes *Smith* or *Gold*, and *Avakian* becomes *King*. So, with a painless change of name, and in the twinkling of an eye, one becomes a white American.

Later, in the midnight hour, the missing identity aches. One can neither assess nor overcome the storm of the middle passage. One is mysteriously shipwrecked forever, in the Great New World.

The slave is in another condition, as are his heirs: *I told Jesus it would be all right/ If He changed my name*.

If He changed my name.

The Irish middle passage, for but one example, was as foul as my own, and as dishonorable on the part of those responsible for it. But the Irish became white when they got here and began rising in the world, whereas I became black and began sinking. The Irish, therefore and

thereafter — again, for but one example — had absolutely no choice but to make certain that I could not menace their safety or status or identity: and, if I came too close, they could, with the consent of the governed, kill me. Which means that we can be friendly with each other anywhere in the world, except Boston.

What a monumental achievement on the part of those heroes who conquered the North American wilderness!

The price the white American paid for his ticket was to become white — : and, in the main, nothing more than that, or, as he was to insist, nothing less. This incredibly limited not to say dimwitted ambition has choked many a human being to death here: and this, I contend, is because the white American has never accepted the real reasons for his journey. I know very well that my ancestors had no desire to come to this place: but neither did the ancestors of the people who became white and who require of my captivity a song. They require of me a song less to celebrate my captivity than to justify their own.

[from *Price of the Ticket: Collected Non-Fiction* 1976-65, NY: St. Martin's 1985].

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BLUES FOR MR. CHARLIE

My heart is heavier tonight than it has ever been before. I raise my voice to you tonight out of a sorrow and a wonder I have never felt before. Not only I, my Lord, am in this case. Everyone under the sound of my voice, and many more souls than that, feel as I feel, and tremble as I tremble, and bleed as I bleed. It is not that the days are dark — we have known dark days. It is not only that the blood runs down and no man helps us; it is not only that our children are destroyed before our eyes. It is not only that our lives, from day to day and every hour of each day, are menaced by the people among whom you have set us down. We have borne all these things, my Lord, and we have done what the prophets of old could not do, we

have sung the Lord's song in a strange land. In a strange land! What was the sin committed by our forefathers in the time that has vanished on the other side of the flood, which has had to be expiated by chains, by the lash, by hunger and thirst, by slaughter, by fire, by the rope, by the knife, and for so many generations, on these wild shores, in this strange land? Our offense must have been mighty, our crime immeasurable. But it is not the past which makes our hearts so heavy. It is the present. Lord, where is our hope? Who, or what, shall touch the hearts of this headlong and unthinking people and turn them back from destruction? When will they hear the words of John? I will not abandon the land — this strange land, which is my home. But can I ask

the children forever to sustain the cruelty inflicted on them? I have set my face against the darkness, I will not let it conquer me, even though it will, I know, one day, destroy this body. But, my Lord, what of the children? What shall I tell the children? I must be with you, Lord, like Jacob, and wrestle with you until the light appears — I will not let you go until you give me a sign! A sign that in the terrible Sahara of our time a fountain may spring, the fountain of a true morality, and bring us closer, oh, my Lord, to that peace on earth desired by so few throughout so many ages. Let not our suffering endure forever. Teach us to trust the great gift of life and learn to love one another and dare to walk the earth like men. Amen.

[from *Blues for Mister Charles*, NY: Dell Publishing, 1964].



JAZZ 1930's GRAND TERRACE BALLROOM

R. BEARDEN

ROMARE BEARDEN (1912-1988)

Another giant gone. Romare Bearden, father/brother whose vision changed the way artists had to see things, had to create things. The news of his passing should not have been like a lightening bolt because I had warnings. They said he was in the hospital, but I'm still numb and furious about how death has come, once again, and had the audacity to reach out its bony arms and claim one of the generals in our cultural army. And his death reminds me of others: John Killens, novelist supreme; Larry Neal, poet/scholar/genius; John Kendrick, my painting student whose art was on the dangerous cutting edge.

In Boston in the mid-70s, long after I'd first seen his bold and careful collages, I heard Bearden, Baptist preacher, talk about how we visual artists needed longer to perfect our craft than the musicians and dancers we so often envy. Patience and diligence. Hard advice for the angry among us. Later, when I saw the Brooklyn Museum's Bearden retrospective, it was clear, despite his fame and acclaim, that Bearden had kept on growing. His work seemed lighter, more spiritual. From his Afro-centric North Carolina core he'd perfected a

vocabulary that both re-created our worlds and showed its rhythms, colors, and textures to those outside it. His art is like the musicians'—precise, perfected, tempting those of us who are left in its shadow to try to fill the possibilities. His dazzling achievements have made us bold enough to dare. Bearden's legacy is too rich for us to exhaust, deep enough for dozens of us to mine, wide enough to make us too wise to try to leap-frog over it. No time for tears. Death may have snatched Romare Bearden, but I think the Creator has a master plan which forces us to be strong and inventive. The work is there. Bearden calls us to keep our hands on the plow, our eyes on the victory.

His life, his force, will be lost, but he leaves a legacy of visual thought that is long and deep, wide and rich. His most recent creations for me are light years ahead of his and my time, which only means that those of us who've committed ourselves have been dragged into this arena and we have to then fight that much harder. But with the legacy of Bearden's vision, I have to smile knowing that victory is ours.

NELSON STEVENS



MEMORIES

R. BEARDEN



R. BEARDEN

REUNION



ROMARE BEARDEN

Photo by Adger Cowans



R. BEARDEN

AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA/FARAFINDUGU

AFRICOBRA/FARAFINDUGU CELEBRATIONS AND SURVIVALS

One of the most enduring and significant manifestations of the Black Arts Movement of the sixties was the creation of Africobra/Farafindugu with its compelling ideology. This artistic ideology springs from the ethos of African American and Pan-African spiritual and political culture. This aesthetic ideology seeks to impose a new visual reality on the world; and in the process move the audience to a more profound realization of its inner possibilities.

Art/image making, is fundamentally the working out of the mysteries that undergrid human experience. The icon, or image, represents the symbolic identity of both the artist and the audience to which the work is addressed. In the case of the wondrous and awesome images of Africobra/Farafindugu, we are speaking of images that when juxtaposed together represent the visual narrative of a Nation asserting its artistic consciousness.

Here we enter a world where the connection between music and color become vividly manifested. Further, we must note these artists are attempting to stretch and extend their use of colors across the full range of

the spectrum—much like Coltrane attempting to squeeze a multiplicity of tonal patterns and textures out of every note played on the saxophone.

In both contexts (image making and sound making), colors and notes are essentially units of energy. The aesthetic ground for this approach to making art seems to be rooted in the rhythmic values of African aesthetics, what Leopold Senghor called the "vibratory shock."

These artists, many of them trained in the techniques and procedures of Western art, have turned these very same technical procedures towards the elucidation and expression of a unique and varied African American attitude towards the business of making images. They present to us an iconography bestowed on them by the pressing and always exciting culture of the African American. In this sense, we could call them the "visual griots" of the African American community.

The Africobra/Farafindugu was formed in Chicago in 1968, "the year of consciousness." The movement announced itself as the African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists (Africobra). In this aesthetic vocabulary, the term "bad" means *bold*; "bad" means aesthetic integrity, artistic and social commitment. It further means an intention to project strong and engaging imagery; imagery that illumines the beauty and glory of the African experience in the West.

Larry Neal 1973

AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA
AFRICOBRA



AKILI RON ANDERSON: AFRICOBRA



HOMAGE TO DUKE

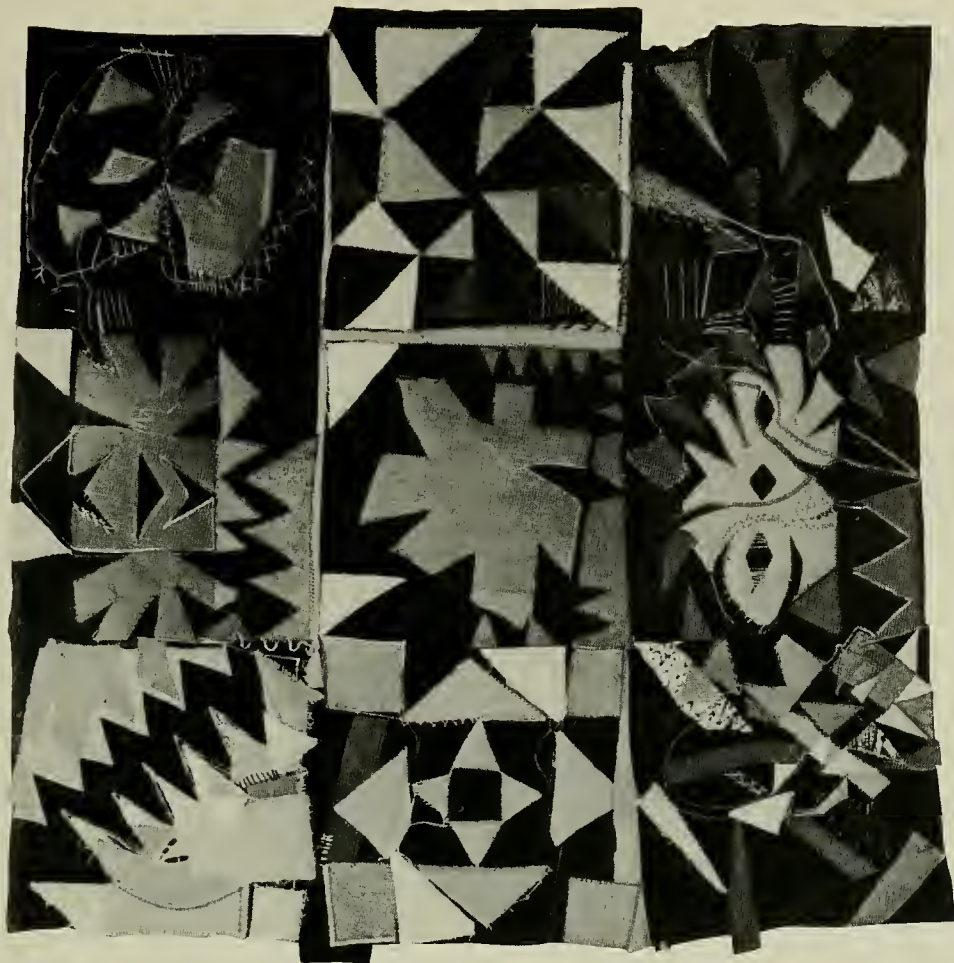
WADSWORTH JARRELL: AFRICOBRA

AFRICOBRA



Photo by Adger Cowans

AFRICOBRA : *From left to right, Napoleon Jones-Henderson, Adger Cowans, Wadsworth Jarrell, Michael Harris, Nelson Stevens, Akili Ron Anderson, Jeff Donaldson, Frank Smith, Murry DePillars, James Phillips.*



HERITAGE

FRANK SMITH: AFRICOBRA

AFRI-COBRA: Twenty Years Later

Afri-Cobra is a group of Black artists who are devoted to the idea that Black art has innate creative components which are characteristic of and due to the ethnic group. The artists, in developing Afri-Cobra, felt that they shared a common philosophy and a common system of aesthetic principles. Also, they "*wanted to create a greater role as Black artists who were not for self but for our kind.*" — Barbara Jones Hugo '69

And so, in 1968, Afri-Cobra was born. Afri-Cobra's art is not simply for art's sake, but rather it is specific and functional. Their goal is to express statements on their existence as Black people. The art is to communicate clearly to the viewers their visual statements, which are Black, positive, and purposeful.

There are specific guidelines regarding the visual statements to be used in the work of Afri-Cobra artists: visual statement must be humanistic with the figure frontal and direct, conveying strength,

pride, and straightforwardness; visual statement must identify problems and offer solutions; subject matter must be completely understood by the viewer (lettering may be used to clarify this visual statement); and visual statement must be educative of the past, present and future.

The art of Afri-Cobra—which began simply as COBRA, Coalition of Black Revolutionary Artists—is based on the elements of festive, 'Kool-aid' colors and Black positive statements stressing a direction in the image with lettering, lost and found line, and shape.

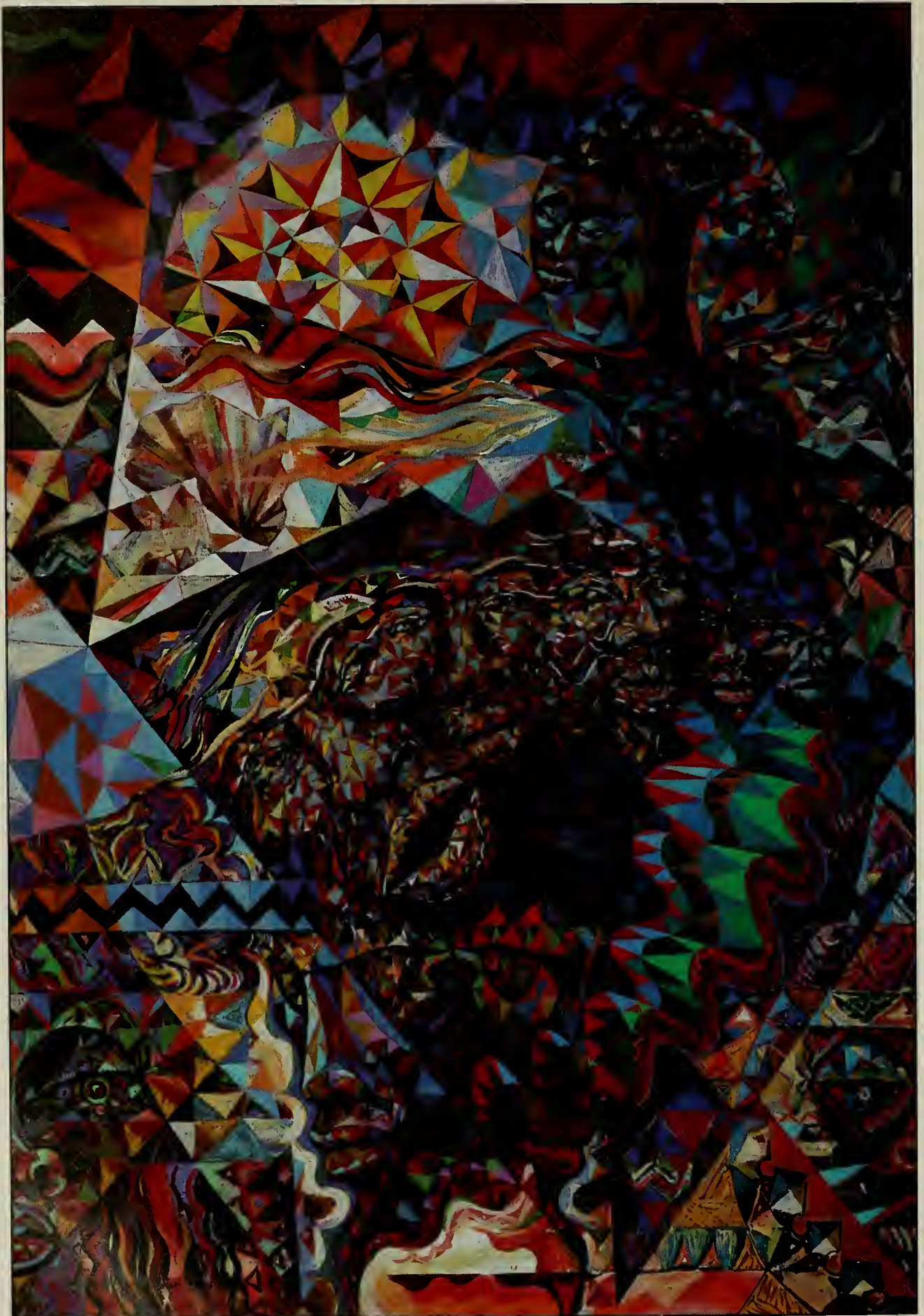
COBRA members, in the earlier years, met every two weeks to analyze and critique the progress of each member. This gave each artist the opportunity to work both independently and collectively with his or her peers—to teach and to learn.

Afri-Cobra's first exhibit, entitled "Ten in Search of a Nation," was held at The Studio Museum in Harlem in 1970. The ten artists exhibiting were Nelson

Stevens, Carolyn Lawrence, Wadsworth Jarrell, Sherman Beck, Napoleon Henderson, Gerald Williams, Jeff Donaldson, Jae Jarrell, Omar Lama, and Barbara J. Jones. This show was the first of its kind in that the original work was not for sale. The purpose of the exhibit was not for the artists' individual gain, but rather it was a unified effort to educate and inform the public of Afri-Cobra's message.

Silk-screened prints of the work exhibited were produced and sold to the public at an affordable cost. This made the art available to a large audience. The original idea was for one piece from each artist to be made into a print, but the group lost some artists during this process. While continuing to produce silk-screened prints, Afri-Cobra artists focused on the continual fall of Black education, and the need for education which was based on the story and accomplishments of Black people. These works composed the second Afri-Cobra exhibit,

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We Have Seen His Righteous Witness . . .

by Michael Thelwell

One does not encompass in a few words—or a great many for that matter—the extraordinary, many-faceted complexity of the man, the presence, indeed the phenomenon known to the world as James Baldwin.

"He had in him the elements so mixed . . ."

On the one hand, so infinite a sweetness and gentleness of spirit; an openness to, and a capacity for love so deep as to appear almost as vulnerability. On the other, a boldness: a quality of moral courage; a fearless, passionate, militant, unrepentant commitment to struggle and to justice that was heroic.

On the one hand, the penetrating insight of an intelligence so brilliant, sharp and incisive as sometimes to be painful. On the other, the warm personal generosity and profound decency of the man. The slight, almost fragile physical presence out of which shone a greatness of soul, a radiant moral dignity that was clearly—in the best sense of that term—regal. An aristocracy not of birth, but of spirit.

" . . . that nature might stand up and say to all the world, this was a man."

So, where to begin, friends? From which source do we take a text this morning? In the sanctified church out of which he came one must—on such an occasion—take a text. Clearly we must look to one of the many streams that flowed into his art, nourished his vision and informed his genius. A line, then, maybe from: a hymn, a battle hymn? *"We have seen his righteous witness . . ."* or, Shakespeare, a writer whose language equalled his? *"Let us sit down on the ground and tell sad stories of the death of kings . . ."* The King James version? *"Let us now praise famous men . . ."* The affirmation of the spiritual? *"Ain't no grave can hold my body down . . ."* The Blues? *"Yo' was a ramblin' man, Daddy, But yo' spirit never done lef' home."* Or, we could go to the streets. A line overheard in a Harlem bar after he had appeared on television in confrontation with a former Attorney General of the United States: *"Whooiee, that little dude be kicking ass, Baby! The brother sho' don't take no shit, do he!"*

Any or all of those would serve.

But, I think, and not merely in deference, to Chinua, to our respected senior brother who just spoke, I shall recourse to the proverbial wisdom of the Ibo elders, as it were, to the source. Our African ancestor said: *"If you went to see a mask dancing, you cannot stand in one place."* And so it was with Jimmy. He indeed was one of the numinous presences, one of the great masked, ancestral spirits of our time, covering so much ground in his prophetic dance, that one had to constantly keep moving in order to see it truly.

But those same ancestors also said, *"Truth is like a goat-skin bag, each man carries his own."* Truth and Jimmy were friends. Indeed truth was his constant companion, they were one and inseparable. And all of us in this room, we who have spoken, and you who have listened each carry our own version of this truth. Each different, each personal, each in its own way true. So what I will do in the time left me is to share with you a portion of mine . . .

In the Spring of 1960 I was a freshman at Howard University and a member of a group of young blacks who had begun, in the nation's capital, demonstrations against the racist social practice of the society. It was an exciting time. We sensed that something profound had definitely begun, but had no idea where it would end, or what price would ultimately be exacted. We knew that there would be a price and that someone would have to pay it, but we were determined to "see what the end would be."

This "militance" was not well received by the administration, or if the truth be told, a goodly number of our peers. Among many adults there was the feeling that our defiance would only make things worse, embarrass the race and ultimately and inevitably provoke the angry retribution of white America. It was for wiser that you young Negroes, as they called us, looked to your education; stay neat, clean, polite and respectful; suppress them Southern accents, master "proper" speech and don't wear you hair in that wild "African" bush. In this way white folk might—if we rendered ourselves thoroughly inoffensive—gradually come to "accept" us. This we heard daily, though some faculty offered quiet encouragement and a few "radicals" like Sterling Brown did so boldly and publicly.

One day we received an unusual invitation. It was in terms so intriguing—and as it proved, prophetic—that I have never forgotten the conversation.

"Mike, does the name James Baldwin mean anything to you?"

"Yeah vaguely . . . isn't he some kind of writer . . . remind me?" As you can see, at that time I didn't really know his name.

"Well, my friend, he's an extraordinary writer and a very curious and interesting man. He's a small black man from Harlem with this remarkable face—some would say almost ugly—but very mobile and expressive with these big, intense pop eyes. But once he opens his mouth, I guarantee, you will never have heard such intelligence, such brilliance . . . And his personal life is always so complicated, always chaotic, skirting the edge of crisis. He's giving a talk in Georgetown and particularly asked that some of the movement kids be there." With an invitation like that how could we not.

Baldwin was returning from twelve years of French exile drawn back as much by the pictures of Little Rock as by two manuscripts packed in his luggage. Within a year these manuscripts would become the best-selling *Another Country* and *Nobody Knows My Name*, an ironic title which would soon be rendered utterly false.

So . . . we, a group of us, made the trek across the city into Georgetown, then as now, the preserve of Washington's affluent and powerful or of pretenders and aspirants to that status, which at that time meant exclusively white folk.

When we entered the meeting had started. The neighborhood was unfamiliar and we had some difficulty finding the rather imposing house of an affluent former socialist. James Baldwin

stood in the center of the packed living room. Completely, as it were, surrounded by white America. We were late, somewhat tense or at least not at all at ease and trying hard not to show it. It was, I think for most of us, our first incursion into the alien territory known as social contact with white folk. All eyes turned to the door, and we had another first: the radiance of that legendary Baldwin smile.

He turned and seeing the young blacks (no: we weren't blacks yet, still Negroes) the mobile, expressive face erupted into a smile of such immediate and spontaneous charisma and protectiveness that we were immediately at peace. "Hi," he said, "I'm James Baldwin, and I'm so very glad you came."

The rest of the evening is not so easy to describe. Baldwin was about thirty-five, in the flowering of his power. Even his gestures and expressions were eloquent and he displayed a precision and poetry of language, an elegance of mind such as I had never seen before. He was never strident or abrasive, gracious, indeed almost gentle with even the most obtuse and ill-informed questions, of which there were many. But totally clear, uncompromising, evading no question, side-stepping no issue and never, never, never defensive or apologetic for the race. He made believers of us.

As we watched, marvelled and cheered we could feel movement, the very ground shifting beneath us. The fundamental terms of racial discourse were permanently being transformed and elevated before our eyes. We were receiving confirmation of all—which in inchoate and unformed ways—we had been feeling in our hearts, now given form and utterance in the sparkling, lambent clarity of Baldwinian language.

"No, no my friends you are mistaken. The question is not one of acceptance but of forgiveness. Not whether America will accept us, but whether we can find it in our hearts to forgive you."

Our hosts who had felt themselves to be enlightened and sympathetic to the Negro problem felt these tremors too. Their questions became more and more uncertain, befuddled and therefore belligerent, as their most comforting clichés and complacent assumptions were one by one rendered unavailable and permanently unserviceable. Of course all of us, indeed the nation, have many times since heard those cadences and felt the weight of those arguments. But to encounter them, at the opening of that fateful decade, for the first time and in the context I have tried to describe . . .

Leaving that meeting we strode through the dark city as though in twelve-League boots. We had *heard* his righteous witness. It was not merely that white racism held no further terror for us, it was that we couldn't *wait* for that sucker to raise its ugly head. We were ready. I think the word of choice now is "empowered." That evening, I see now, was for us the beginning of a unique relationship, involving not only the few fortunate enough to be present, but between James Baldwin and our whole generation of black Americans.

About a year later when the student challenge had gathered force and Baldwin's fame had grown, that relationship was formalized. We invited Baldwin, John O. Killens and Ossie Davis onto our campus to discuss the black writer's responsibility. Again it was a highly charged evening for the writers and for the students.

In the small hours of morning, as the sun was rising over the capitol, in a small student apartment to which we had adjourned the discussion which had raged all night there came a moment when Baldwin summarized the meaning of the encounter. Speaking slowly and thoughtfully he said, as I remember, "As a black writer, I must in some way, some very real way, represent you, my young brothers and sisters. You didn't bestow this responsibility . . . I didn't choose it. . . But there it is. All I can say, is that I will never betray that, . . . never betray you. If you—all of you—will promise me that you never will accept the reductive definitions of your existence

that this republic has ready for you . . . I promise you I shall never betray you."

He never did, betray us or himself.

And he could have so easily, because then those two imposters fame and celebrity came pounding and kicking on his door. When James Baldwin burst across the cultural firmament and national consciousness like a new-born comet—the rockets red glare—the establishment's literati and media came a-courting, seeking to immobilize him in a fulsome embrace.

"Come on Jimmy. You still can't be angry. You've made it, you're big time now."

Jimmy, they never knew who you was.

Because while their journals, magazines and airwaves prated about his "bitter fire", "angry genius", "astounding gifts" and "terrible eloquence" they were incapable really, of understanding their source or meaning, or that these were not commodities, and that Jimmy would and could not permit them to be packaged into merchandise. What they did not understand was that the source of Baldwin's power came from a style and a vision both of which were firmly and irrevocably anchored in the soul of black folk. The remorseless clarity of his vision lay in a perspective on American reality forged in the fiery crucible of the black experience. And the wisdom and insight of that bitter and ennobling history was simply not negotiable. And further, that magnificent prose, at its finest, was a new perfect instrument for its expression. Because the nuances and poetry of that style were informed by centuries of the rich cultural expression of black America. The best of black American cultural idiom: the blues' earthy ironies; the spirituals' haunting power; the saucy riffs and defiant rhythms of jazz; the awful moral cadences of King James; the gospel's ecstatic shout and the preacher's god-intoxicated growl were all synthesized into an instrument of remarkable beauty and compelling power.

For the first time, and a brief moment, in the history of this sad republic *the distilled voice of 300 years of African American experience spoke directly to the nation and compelled its grudging attention.* That was his power, his gift and his burden. This is why the little romance with the literati could not last. It was also why Baldwin's vision, loyalties and commitments were not and could not have been for sale, rent or lease. Why his gifts—and the responsibility which attended them—could not be subsumed or assimilated into some smug, complacent consensus of the white literary mainstream.

Had they been, Jimmy would have died an obscenely wealthy man, and spiritually, long before now, praised in all the wrong places for all the wrong reasons. He would have, indeed, betrayed himself and us. He never did. So the *apparatchiks* of the literary establishment seeing that his witness could not be suborned, turned overnight from fulsome admiration and importunings to venom.

I will always remember a most instructive lunch in 1964. I, then a senior in college and the author of a grand total of three published short stories, was being courted by an agent, an editor and a critic. "Mr. Thelwell, you really should write a novel," they urged. Then at the end the agent gave a great smile of accomplishment. "Good. Then that's settled. I think the time is ripe! This country is *ready for a new Negro writer. That James Baldwin is finished.* Did you see Blues for Mr. Charlie? Really!"

What an unholy marriage of arrogance and ignorance! But it was profoundly eye-opening to a young Negro who might otherwise have had his head turned. Something else I owe to Jimmy. Of course, like Mark Twain, pronouncements of his demise were greatly exaggerated and quite premature.

In recent years it was my honor to travel on occasion with Jimmy to various events. Wherever we went people of my generation—white and black—would approach him, almost

with reverence. The blacks would hug him, the whites shake his hand. Always it was with an almost fervent sincerity, Mr. Baldwin:

"Your work changed my life . . . when I was in college . . ."

"When we were in jail in South Africa we smuggled your book . . ."

"When I was growing up in Selma, Alabama . . ."

"I cried and trembled the day I read . . ."

One night in 1984 in Washington—the tale had come full circle—a group of younger blacks, clearly a new generation gave a reception for him. I witnessed there an outpouring, spontaneous, heart-felt and joyous, of love and appreciation. I asked him, "Jimmy, how does this make you feel?"

"I feel . . ." he said simply, "I feel blest."

So he is dead. He died with his integrity intact, his legacy unsullied and with his honorable example as a beacon for our guidance and inspiration. I am in no way ashamed to admit publicly that I have tried to model my work and conduct as a writer and a black man on that example. For our generation

of black writers—to the extent we see further than might otherwise have been the case—it is only because we stand huddled on the fragile but formidable shoulders of James Arthur Baldwin. It was an honor and a privilege to have been his friend.

Editors note: On November 30th, 1987, James Baldwin, novelist, poet, playwright and essayist died at his residence in St. Paul de Vence, France. Since 1984, Mr. Baldwin had been Five College Professor, then Visiting Professor in the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. On December 16th at the University of Massachusetts, the Five College community held a service of respect and appreciation. The following is a selection from the remarks made by Mr. Baldwin's friends and colleagues.

[This piece, originally published in *The Massachusetts Review*, is reprinted by permission of author]

A Brother's Love

by Maya Angelou

Speeches will be given, essays written and hefty books will be published on the various lives of James Baldwin. Some fantasies will be broadcast and even some truths will be told. Someone will speak of the essayist James Baldwin in his role as the biblical prophet Isaiah admonishing his country to repent from wickedness and create within itself a clean spirit and a clean heart. Others will examine Baldwin the playwright and novelist who burned with a righteous indignation over the paucity of kindness, the absence of love and the crippling hypocrisy he saw in the streets of the United States and sensed in the hearts of his fellow citizens.

I will speak of James Baldwin, my friend and brother.

"A short brown man came to the door and looked at me. He had the most extraordinary eyes I'd ever seen. When he completed his instant X-ray of my brain, lungs, liver, heart, bowels, and spinal column, he smiled and said, 'Come in,' and opened the door. He opened the door all right. Lord! I was to hear Beauford sing later for many years 'Open the Unusual Door.'"

Thus James Baldwin describes meeting and being met by Beauford Delaney, the provocative black American painter who was to enlarge and enrich Baldwin's life. Baldwin's description of Delaney fitted Baldwin as well, for he, too, was small and brown and had the most extraordinary eyes.

I first met Jim fleetingly in the *boîtes* of Paris when he and I and the world were young enough to believe ourselves independently salvageable. But we became friends in the late 50's, just as the United States was poised to make its quantum leap into the future, as Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and other Southerners were girding themselves for the second Civil War in 100 years and while Malcolm X was giving voice to the anger in the streets and in the minds of Northern black city folks.

In that riotous pulse of political fervor, James Baldwin and I met again and liked each other. We discussed courage, human rights, God and justice. We talked about black folks and love, about white folks and fear.

Although Jimmy was known as an accomplished playwright, few people knew that he was a frustrated actor as well. I had a role in Jean Genet's play "The Blacks," and since Jimmy knew Genet personally and the play in the original French, nothing could keep him from advising me on my performance. He furnished me with my first limousine ride, set the stage for me to write "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," encouraged me to take a course in cinematography in Sweden and told me that I was intelligent and very brave. I knew Jim loved me when he gave me to Gloria and Paula, Wilmer and David Baldwin and all the rest of his siblings and when he took me to Mother Baldwin and said: "Just what you don't need, another daughter, but here she is." I knew that he knew black women may find lovers on street corners or even in church pews, but brothers are hard to come by and are as necessary as air and as precious as love. James Baldwin knew that black women in this desolate world, black women in this cruel time which has no soundness in it, have a crying need for brothers. He knew that brother's love redeems a sister's pain. His love opened the unusual door for me and I am blessed that James Baldwin was my brother.

Editor's note: This eulogy was delivered at the James Arthur Baldwin memorial service held at The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City on December 8, 1987.

JIMMY

by Amiri Baraka

First of all, Jimmy Baldwin was not only a writer, an international literary figure, he was man, spirit, voice—old and black and terrible as that first ancestor.

As man, he came to us from the family, the human lives, names we can call David, Gloria, Lover, George, Samuel, Barbara, Ruth, Elizabeth, Paula . . . and this extension, is one intimate identification as he could so casually, in that way of his, eyes and self smiling, not much larger than that first ancestor, fragile as truth always is, big eyes popped out like righteous monitors of the soulful. The Africans say that big ol eyes like that means someone can make things happen! And he did.

Between Jimmy's smile and grace, his insistent elegance even as he damned you, even as he smote what evil was unfortunate, breathing or otherwise, to stumble his way. He was all the way live, all the way conscious, turned all the way up, receiving and broadcasting, sometime so hard, what needed to, would back up from those two television tubes poking out of his head!

As man, he was my friend, my older brother he would joke, not really joking. As man he was Our friend, Our older or younger brother, we listened to him like we would somebody in our family—whatever you might think of what he might say. We could hear it. He was close, as man, as human relative, we could make it some cold seasons merely warmed by his handshake, smile or eyes. Warmed by his voice, jocular yet instantly cutting. Kind yet perfectly clear. We could make it sometimes, just remembering his arm waved in confirmation or indignation, the rapid fire speech, pushing out at the world like urgent messages for those who would be real.

This man traveled the earth like its history and its biographer. He reported, criticized, made beautiful, analyzed, cojoked, lyricized, attacked, sang, made us think, made us better, made us consciously human, or perhaps more acidly pre-human.

He was spirit because he was living. And even past this tragic hour when we weep he has gone away, and why, and why we keep asking. There's mountains of evil creatures who we would willingly bid farewell to—Jimmy could have given you some of their names on demand—We curse our luck, our oppressors—our age, our weakness. Why & Why again? And why can drive you mad, or said enough times might even make you wise!

Yet this why in us is him as well. Jimmy was wise from asking whys giving us his wise and his whys to go with our own, to make them into a larger why and a deeper Wise.

Jimmy's spirit, which will be with us as long as we remember ourselves, is the only truth which keeps us sane and changes our whys to wisdom. It is his spirit, spirit of the little black first ancestor, which we feel those of us who really felt it, we know this spirit will be with us for 'as long as the sun shines and the water flow.' For his is the spirit of life thrilling to its own consciousness.

His spirit is part of our own, it is our feelings' completion. Our perceptions' extension. The edge of our rationale, the paradigm for our best use of this world.

When we saw and heard him, he made us feel good. He made us feel, for one thing, that we could defend ourselves or define ourselves, that we were in the world not merely as animate slaves, but as terrifyingly sensitive measurers of what is good or evil, beautiful or ugly. This is the power of his spirit. This is the bond which created our love for him. This is the fire that terrifies our pitiful enemies. That not only are we alive but shatteringly precise in our songs and our scorn. You could not possibly think yourself righteous, murderers, when you saw or were wrenched by our Jimmy's spirit! He was carrying it as us, as we carry him as us.

Jimmy will be remembered, even as James, for his word. Only the completely ignorant can doubt his mastery of it. Jimmy Baldwin was the creator of contemporary American speech even before Americans could dig that. He created it so we could speak to each other at unimaginable intensities of feeling, so we could make sense to each other at yet higher and higher tempos.

But that word, arranged as art, sparkling and gesturing from the page, was also man and spirit. Nothing was more inspiring than hearing that voice, seeing that face, and that whip of tongue, that signification that was his fingers, reveal and expose, raise and bring down, condemn or extol!

Let us hold him in our hearts and minds. Let us make him part of our invincible black souls, the intelligence of our transcendence. Let our black hearts grow big world absorbing eyes like his, never closed. Let us one day be able to celebrate him like he must be celebrated if we are even to be truly self-determining. For Jimmy was God's black revolutionary mouth; if there is a God, and revolution his righteous natural expression and elegant song, the deepest and most fundamental commonplace of being alive.

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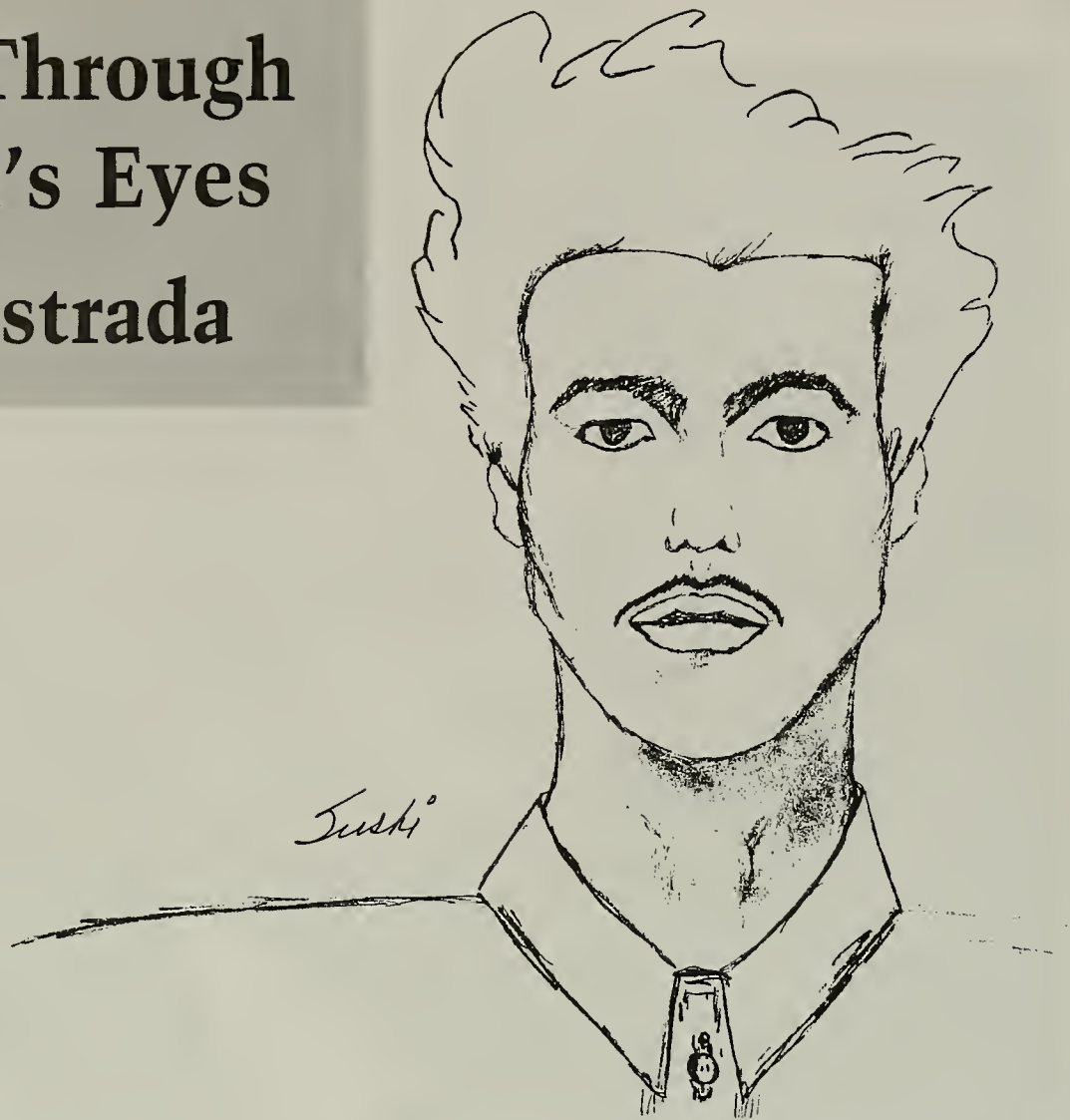


Photo by Edward Cohen

1924-1987

Fashion Through an Angel's Eyes

Angel Estrada



Fashion is a never-ending, always-changing adventure. Designers are constantly at work inventing the unique, the different, the form of art that maintains an aesthetic quality about all individuals. The American woman has been the force and source of new fashion ideas. She has shown this ability time and time again from the day she refused to wear the midi and caused the bankruptcy of many manufacturers and retailers to the day she changed the course of history and the women's movement by wearing pants. Granted she could not do it alone. It was the designers who listened and who transformed their creativity into workable, material forms of art. They came out with the house dress to accommodate the house-ridden women of post-World War II. And it is today's designers who understand the "want-it-all" woman of the modern world. She's mentally and physically active and healthy. Her wardrobe is no longer restricted by age, career, or family categorizations, but only the boundaries of her individual personality. It's the era of the "Forty and Beautiful" and the "Fashion Plus." No longer do you have to be size 6, 120 lbs. to wear Dan-

skins or a Bill Blass design. The "forgotten woman" of size 12 and up can feel glamorous. This neglected beauty is now accepted and being catered to.

New York City reflects diversity not only in fashion but in the designers it generates. The rising stars in the industry range in ethnicity from Korean Cathy Hardwick and Afro-American Isai Rankin to Cuban Isabella Toledo. But of the new crop, we see a Spaniard making strides in this newest fashion era.

Inspired by the likes of Yves Saint Laurent and the late Charles James, this imaginative young talent is establishing a promising career for himself. At age twenty-nine, Angel Estrada is now working on his sixth collection. You can find his creations in prestigious Bergdorf Goodmans, Saks Fifth Avenue, Linda Dresners, and a few other stores in and out of the country. Angel has been able to concentrate his efforts in designing, while his partner, Anneliese Orr maintains the business side of the operation.

Angel came to the country 25 years ago and lived a quiet, average childhood in Manhattan, New York. As far back as he

can remember, he had always been interested in the arts and spent most of his time drawing. After high school he went to the Parsons School for the Fine Arts majoring in Fashion Illustration. After a short time, he left school and free-lanced for a few years, designing clothes for specific clients, illustrating, and basically doing anything he could get his hands on. Introduced by mutual friends, Angel then established a working relationship with his four-year partner, Anneliese Orr. As she remembers, "It was just one of those mutual arrangements, one of those things that happened...he was ready to put out a collection and I was there and able to look after the business side..." By 1984, he put together his first spring collection. The small company they had established still remains in a quaint studio on Lafayette Street.

Now, who is this man behind the cloth? He's a mysterious, charismatic man with a style of his own. Dressing simply and casually himself, he has almost always been interested in women's clothing. You could say that his main source of inspiration was his sister, Virginia Estrada, for

whom he designed his first dress. To this day they've worked closely together and many of the original samples are made for her. Virginia exemplifies the modern woman of the decade. She is a talented, well-known sculptress in New York and designs a jewelry collection for her brother every season.

Angel has been able to capture the essence of today's American woman with his sophisticated yet sensuous style. He designs with no particular woman in mind, but for women in general, although his clients are generally thin. He describes his clientele as "Any woman who would enjoy wearing my clothing. I have no particular image of what a woman should be. She can be any one. She can wear heels or flats—it doesn't matter." He lets her decide.

Angel starts his creations by first considering combinations of fabric and color. His basic silhouette stays relatively the same—slim. Shoulders and legs are loved at his house and are often accentuated in his designs. He describes the expression of his clothing as "...sophisticated in itself. The image around them is that they are well made, sexy clothing...very forward, but not gaudy or overpowering." Angel is still experimenting with fabric, so he has no favorite. He loves all hues and feels they are very important to his collections. His collections have ranged from extremely colorful, to toned, to all black, depending on the season and his feel for creativity at the time. However, one thing that stays consistent throughout his collections is the quality. He feels "...to put a full garment together from fabric to construction to quality, to them all, quality is the most important thing. A quality garment is very special." Angel believes that in order to be a successful designer, one must work at it and be dedicated. His philosophy is to be true to whatever you feel about your clothing, to be honest to yourself, and not to be worried or concerned about anyone (competitors) or anything else.

As for the future, we may see shoes, lingerie, bathing suits—we may even see menswear. He feels if the opportunities arise and they are feasible, he will expand. But for now, he is happy with the way things are going. He is free to design how and what he pleases and has no major pressures upon him. His only goal at this point is to maintain his standing and grow slowly. And from the looks of it, his positive following from the press, good store rapport, and his confident and competent assistant, Anneliese, are all leading him into a bright and prosperous future.

Susan M. Hodgkins is a graduating Fashion Marketing major.

The Outside

by Andre M. Jones

You see the fire escapes,
outside the windows with drapes;
to block the pain—
from the outside.
And down by the railroad tracks,
over the water,
it's so polluted out there.
A drunk man walked across it last night—
and he didn't sink;
because the trash is so thick,
and you know it stinks.
It's not even a river anymore . . .
just a liquid junk yard.
And on its littered shore,
abandoned getaway cars,
with the windows shot out.
Bullet holes in the doors, on cinder blocks,
with the tires stripped.
And rusty, souped up V-8's
where racers retired their Detroit thoroughbreds—
but kept their license plates . . .
and disappeared into the alleyways,
heading back to places, they call home.
Just to climb up the fire escapes,
into the windows, all covered with drapes
to keep the darkness from shining in.
To block the pain—
from the outside.



COACHING EXCELLENCE

It's 5:30 and the afternoon daylight has given way to a dark evening sky. Kalekeni Mtalika Banda, the University of Massachusetts Women's soccer and track team coach, is busy looking through his appointment book, opening the mail piled on top of his desk and making phone calls.

Instead of wearing a sweat suit, lanyard and rugged turf shoes, Banda is dressed in a sharp blue pin-stripe suit, red patterned tie and brown leather wing-tipped shoes. He has a bright friendly smile, and a neatly trimmed beard. As for his office, it looks like a giant display case, chock-full of awards, wall plaques, trophies, certificates, flags, teams photos and videotapes.

Kalekeni Mtalika Banda is not your average athletic coach.

Banda says he first came to the United States with his diplomat father in 1967 and attended Mamaroneck High School in New York. He was then sent to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst by the Malawi Government to study sports. As an undergraduate at UMass he lettered in both soccer and track while earning a B.S. degree in physical education. He graduated in 1975 and returned

to Africa where he played semi-professional soccer and served as technical advisor to the executive committee of the Amateur Association of Malawi. While there, he also gained three years of international experience with the Malawi Olympic Teams. In 1979, Banda returned to UMass as an assistant women's soccer and track coach.

During the seven years Banda has been the head coach, UMass women's soccer has amassed an impressive 100 wins with only 23 losses and 10 ties. His teams have participated in four NCAA National Final Four Championships.

Banda himself has received numerous coaching honors. He has won the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) New England Region Coach-of-the-Year award in 1982 and 1985, as well as the New England Women's Intercollegiate Soccer Association (NEWISA) Coach-of-the-Year award and the NSCAA Coach-of-the-Year award for 1985. In the last 1987 season he was named NSCAA's Woman's Coach-of-the-Year.

In addition to soccer, Coach Banda has also been successful as the head coach of

the women's track and field team, building a strong contender in the New England track scene.

Banda modestly says that he doesn't have a real formula for his success, and that his philosophy for winning is really quite simple: he doesn't have one.

"Some coaches are authoritarian, soldier-like, some say 'My way or the highway,' and some are laissez-faire. As for Banda, I'm teaching athletes to be better human beings, sharing all with them the options and customs I've been exposed to."

He says winning really began for him when he was a child in his native village of Tonga, in Malawi, Africa. He was educated by his family, in particular, the elders of his village who stressed self-knowledge, respect of authority and tolerance for an individual's person and culture. His philosophy is really theirs; for Kalekeni Banda, this is the real meaning of success.

"Success," he laughs softly, "my background has a lot to do with my success — it's unique. It was from my village that I learned respect, gained respect, because I was taught to respect myself."

continued on page 60



Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Clive L. DuVal, 2d, McLean, VA

**CIRCLE FOR ANOTHER: MESSAGE
FROM THOTH**

JEFF DONALDSON: AFRICOBRA

Equality: By Any Means Necessary

Equality, is it that impossible? Why must our people be continuously beat for trying to lead a normal life? Is evidence of intelligence and a desire to excel or to simply live as we wish so threatening to the egos of the white world that they must continue to persecute the Black race? Why is the Black person—the beginner of civilization, the creator of culture—continuously made to feel small and useless? Why, above all, are we made to feel afraid or ashamed to be Black? All of these questions must be forced in the faces of the white community and answered by the Black race. We must ask ourselves why, so we can be ready with a sharpened mind for the bureaucracy that has helped to keep us oppressed since the beginning of our contact with the European peoples. The New Africa House occupation served as a sounding board for these questions. It was a time when the Black community, often factioned, came together as one.

It was a Friday afternoon, whose temperature and dreary appearance echoed the feelings in the hearts and countenances of the students as they trudged up the stairs of New Africa House. Watching television the night before, I had listened to the weatherman discuss a storm on the horizon. Thinking back, I doubt he knew how right he really was. The snow was not the only thing that was going to fall. The feelings of fear, dissatisfaction, and of being gullible in the eyes of the administration that had surfaced Thursday night were heightened and added to the newly felt desire for militancy. As a result, we, the Third World Students, were determined to no longer be a chip in the wall of the dam, but to be the hole that weakened the structure until, inevitably, it collapsed under the weight of a people united.

Four p.m., February 12, 1988. What was going to happen? What had already happened? Everyone could sense the tension of the situation, the odor of an impending fight like rotten meat on a hot day. Details, we needed details. Details and facts to help us to understand what needed to be done. We are all thinking human beings. Please don't patronize and rave about our ignorance; explain. A student must perform as any other leader. Leaders must satisfy the people's thirst for knowledge or be responsible for rebellion, which is not an ugly word if used in the appropriate context. However, when the need for unity is mandatory, rebellion within the ranks is disastrous.

At first impatience, eagerness, or perhaps both, on the faces of those who had initiated the "revolt," caused many to feel slighted and insignificant, thereby causing internal conflict. The realization that decisions had been made and



Chancellor Joseph Duffey entering New

demands drawn up heightened the unrest. Many of us thought the thirty or forty students that had made the initial decisions, eager to start the flow of progress, were assuming power roles. The minds and egos of an oppressed people are volatile and ready to explode at the least indication of being unappreciated. Looking around the room, the questioning look on people's faces was asking, "Why wasn't this meeting devised to decide what actions should be taken? Why are we standing in an occupied building, when we have not yet, as a body, decided it should be such?" Questioning of the leadership and action that had been taken ended when the masses realized that the direct action that was needed had been taken, and now it had to be enforced with

Photo by N. Stevens





Photo by Roy Lewis

frica House.

diligence, strength, and hard work. Now that we had New Africa House we were definitely not going to give it back. The real question was, "Why should we have to take, much less give back, something that was supposedly already ours?"

For those of us who were at the House on a regular basis, the countless meetings, if they served no other purpose, caused us all to doubt the ability of two hundred people to agree; the beads of perspiration and the permanent expressions of frustration were clearly visible as we sat for a third time to discuss exactly what we wanted from the administration. Why, when we are all working for the same end, did it seem so often that we were working against one another? I believe strongly that this seeming disunity was in fact

the opposite—it was group desire for excellence. We all knew that the wording and context of the demands were crucial to the success of our mission to procure equality. That, coupled with the desire to be counted and instrumental in something that brought national attention, helped us to retain our unity and establish the large following needed to command a successful revolution.

The community support for our fight was tremendous. People donated food and pillows and blankets for those who had taken up residence in New Africa House. Their concern and support lifted our spirits and let us know that we weren't alone in our struggle. We eventually found out that many of the people who protested our allowing only Third World students in the building really were not supporters. If they had been, they would have understood our need, as stated to the press on numerous occasions, to organize ourselves, to understand fully our own needs before we could even begin to include people outside the situation. This was not to say that we did not welcome the support given by the white community. However, we had to first understand ourselves before we could begin to explain ourselves to someone else. Education begins with the individual, and in this case, a people. We cannot begin to express our gratitude to the people who kept us fed and to the supporters who held vigils and rallies to defeat racism. It must be kept in mind at all times that each little shove we give to the wall of injustice will weaken it and it will crumble, so that eventually, hopefully, one day we as a society will not return to its history of judging by black and white.

Whether it was support for the cause or simply the excitement of the event, the

three hundred students—mostly white—who surrounded Chancellor Duffey when he came to hear and negotiate the demands, were expectant. Some were expecting and hoping that he would refuse us and bring in the law, while others, the sympathizers (to coin a phrase) hoped our demand would be met and if they weren't that we could continue to occupy the House. Our story was all across the nation and we hoped that coupled with the plausibility of our demands, the threat of nationwide embarrassment would add strength to our struggle. Our pride swelled and our persistence grew when the Reverend Jesse Jackson called to give his support and mentioned the possibility of a visit. And even an obviously upset Gov. Michael Dukakis phoned and asked the Chancellor to do his best towards giving us what we wanted. The fact that we attracted nationwide attention on the day of the New Hampshire Primary obviously made him feel uncomfortable.

The negotiations lasted for four hours. The students who talked with the Chancellor persevered through the hours of haggling. Afterwards, the strain showed on their faces and in their impatience. We, the general body, waited, not always with patience, to hear and criticize the responses. When all had been formally written up and distributed to us, I think the satisfaction with the answers surprised us all. Of course, there were things we didn't like and weren't satisfied with. But the overall positive response to our demands caught many of us off guard. Then the big question arose: Do we stay, or do we leave? Do we stop fighting in the streets and continue it in the boardroom? Will staying here longer help our cause or hinder it? Tempers flared, emotions ex-

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Photo by Roy Lewis

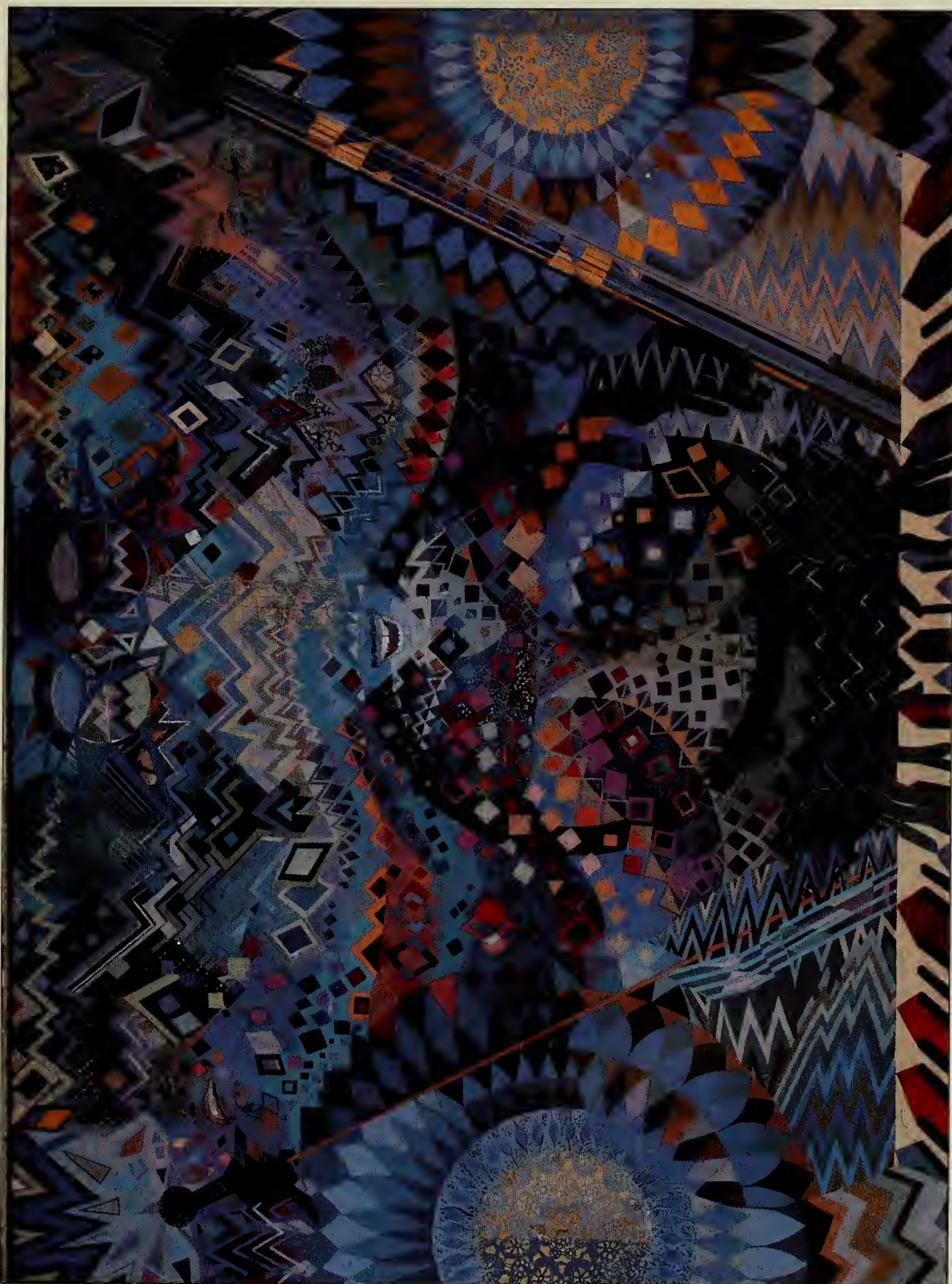


Photo by Nelson Stevens



BE BOP

WADSWORTH JARRELL: AFRICOBRA



SQUARE ONE

JEFF DONALDSON: *AFRICOBRA*

Akhenaten: Unique Among Pharaohs

The eighteenth Dynasty was the time of the greatest growth for Egypt, after a long period of foreign domination by the Asiatic princes known as the Hyksos. Characterized by a surge of expansion and renewed productivity in architecture and the arts, Egypt's civilization rose to new heights. The pharaohs of this time stood out as strong leaders; of them, Akhenaten, or Amenhotep IV, was the most unusual and the most revolutionary.

The beginning of Akhenaten's reign is slightly obscure. After his father Amenhotep III died, his mother Queen Tiye took over briefly. Akhenaten married one of his sisters by the name of Tadukhipa, known in Egypt as Nefertiti, "the beautiful one is come." Shortly after marriage, Nefertiti bore her husband the first of six daughters.

Everyone assumed that Amenhotep IV would follow in the footsteps of his predecessors and shine either at the royal court or on the battlefield. However, Amenhotep IV's intellectual and religious leanings quickly became apparent. Early in the sixth year of his reign, he shook off the worship of Amen, the dominant god of the time, and adopted the worship of the Aten, or sun disk. In addition to changing his name from Amenhotep (meaning "Amen is satisfied") to Akhenaten, he denounced the worship of all gods other than the Supreme Power, symbolized by the Aten, and had Amen's name erased from monuments wherever possible.

Egypt had always been a country divided. From the earliest of Neolithic times this division was evident; the south (Upper Egypt) developed the famous mortuary cult while the north (Lower Egypt) focused on mercantilism and thought little of death. Each area also had its own deity. The sun god, in the form of the hawk (Horus), was worshipped in the north. To them, this bird was the lord of the sky, appearing suddenly and vanishing like a point of light into the heavens. A form of the sun god was also worshipped in the south, though as Amen-Ra, god of Thebes, "light of the heavens." As Thebes rose to power with its kings and became one of the wealthiest cities in the world, so, too, did Amen-Ra rise in divine status until he dominated the Egyptian pantheon.

Into this picture, then, stepped Akhenaten, drawing great surprise with his fervent worship of the Aten, and not Amen-Ra as expected. Not long after becoming pharaoh, he built the Aten a new temple two miles north of Thebes, at Karnak. He included there a series of colossal statues that broke violently with tradition: instead of depicting a trim, athletic figure with traditional garments, they showed Akhenaten in unconventional garb and with an egg-shaped head, elongated jaw, scrawny neck, drooping shoulders, pot belly, and spindly legs. This type of portrayal was an outstanding feature of Akhenaten's rule, and illustrated his motto of "Truth—warts and all."



In the sixth year of his reign, Akhenaten transferred the capital from under the shadow of Amen's greatest temples to a new site 250 miles downriver. A city was built on the east bank, while the ample plain on the west side was used to grow crops to feed the new inhabitants. The place was named Akhet-aten, "the horizon of Aten;" historians call it Amarna after the modern village nearby. It was at this time that the great pharaoh changed his name from Amenhotep to Akhenaten, a final emblem of his rebellion.

In his new capitol, Akhenaten was free to worship the Aten in his own way, as carvings discovered at Amarna

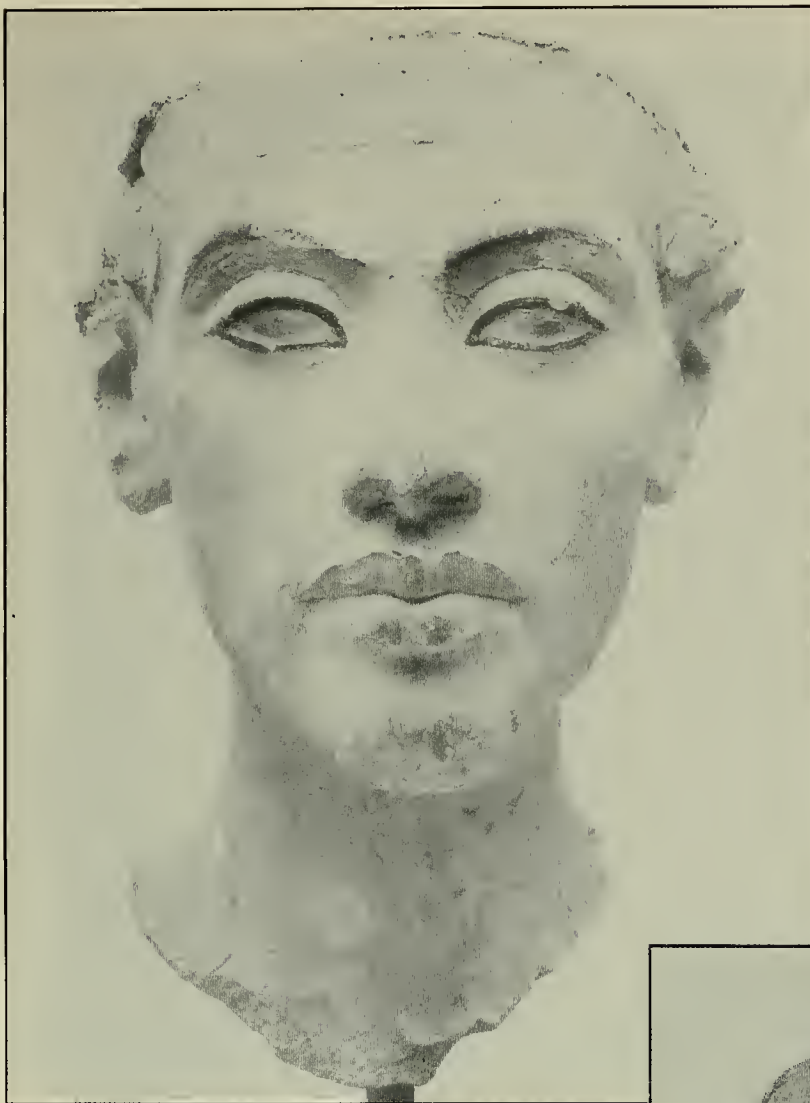
demonstrate. The Aten is depicted with rays that stretch downward towards Akhenaten and his family; surrounding him are his courtiers who bow humbly. Akhenaten prayed to the Aten, and everyone else prayed to Akhenaten. There was no god save the one god, and the sole way to get to him was through Akhenaten. What he created was a form of monotheism, the first example in the history of religion, though it did not have a broad enough appeal to last beyond his reign.

Akhenaten demonstrated a tendency toward the abstract in his sun-worship. Though in other ages the sun was worshipped in human figure as Ra or as his emblem the hawk, Akhenaten's devotion to the Aten was more refined and philosophical. He revered the radiant energy of the sun and its ability to sustain all life by its beams. If this were a new religion, invented to satisfy our modern scientific outlook, we could not find a flaw in his view of the energy of the solar system. The rays of the sun are the means of the sun's action—the source of all life, power, and force in the universe.

Akhenaten's veneration of the Aten is evident in his poetry—the most noteworthy of which is the "Hymn to Aten," taken from *King Sun* by Joy Collier [London: Ward Lock Limited, 1970]. It was simply an outpouring of ecstatic praise:

The Splendour of Aten

*Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven
O living Aten, beginning of life!
When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;
For thou art beautiful, great, glittering,
high above the earth;
Thy rays, they encompass the lands,
even all thou hast made.
Thou art Ra, and thou hast carried them all away captive;
Thou bindest them by thy love.
Though thou art afar, thy rays are on earth;
Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.*



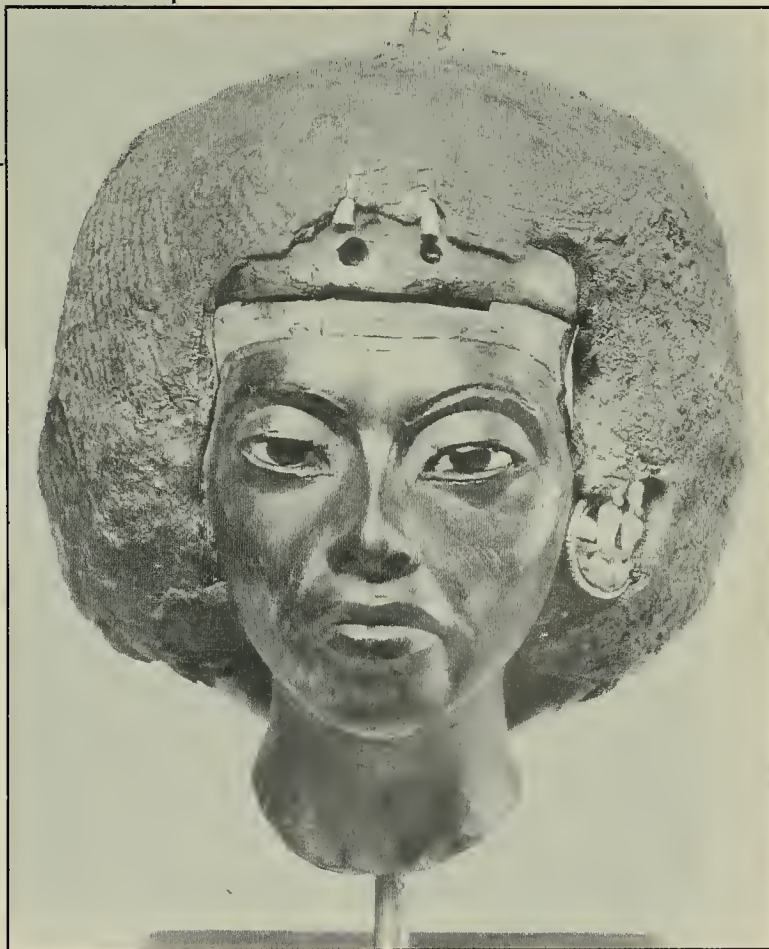
Akhenaten was an intellectual, the sole pharaoh in Egypt's history to boast that distinction. He had advanced ideas concerning women—as well he should have, for both his mother Tiye and his wife Nefertitti provided much of the impetus for the change to Atenism. Akhenaten was only eighteen at the time of the change, yet under Tiye's guidance he gained the strength to nationalize his views. Nefertitti, too, supported the revolution, and in fact her claim to the throne legitimized Akhenaten's rule. Egypt's matrilineal custom dictated that he who became king did so by marrying she whose dowry was all of Egypt; Nefertitti's titles indicate that she was indeed this heir. She was "the great heiress, princess of south and north," and "princess of all women, the lady of both lands." Akhenaten, unlike his predecessors, included Nefertitti and his

children in the royal artwork, signifying a deep appreciation and love of his family.

The art of the Amarna period is its most prominent surviving aspect. Instead of leaving a legacy of gold and treasure, Amarna's true wealth was in its art. Previous rulers had appeared in their portraits performing solemn or heroic actions, always avoiding what was private and intimate. Akhenaten, instead of showing sacrifices to the gods or enemies being conquered, preferred to depict the intimacies of his family life: Akhenaten kissing one of his baby daughters, Nefertitti with one on her lap while another plays with her crown, two sisters caressing one another. Instead of the previous formality and stiffness, in which pharaohs were always figures of might and majesty, Amarna art showed people in natural poses and groupings, emitting a kind of gentleness.

Akhenaten's devotion to the Aten is evident in the sculpture he had commissioned. In each one he is shown adoring or offering gifts to the Aten, which radiates above him. Each of the Aten's rays ends in a hand which supports the king and queen and their crowns. It also gives them power and life as symbolized

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LADY & PRES

WADSWORTH JARRELL: AFRICOBRA



MOOD INDIGO

MICHAEL D. HARRIS: AFRICOBRA



Photo by David Lee

BLACK TO THE FUTURE: Spike Lee, filmmaker

*This piece is a compilation of information gotten from an interview by the author with Spike Lee on March 25, 1988, as well information from an article in **Life Magazine*** (Special Spring 1988 issue), a **Village Voice**† March 22, 1988 interview by Thulani Davis and Spike's book with Lisa Jones, **Uplift the Race: The Construction of School Daze**‡ [Simon and Schuster, 1988].*

I got on the A-train headed for the Lafayette Avenue stop in Brooklyn. Shit. I hope I don't get lost. Lived 23 years in New York, why didn't I get to know Brooklyn any better? Asked the token booth man which way DeKalb was. Right, left a few blocks, then right. Or was that left?

"Hey baby, looking for an apartment?"

"Why, you got one?"

"Yeah—I was looking for someone to share it with."

"I don't think my husband'll go for that."

"Bet."

Works every time. Almost.

O.K. Here it is—124. Damn, I'm early. Ring. "Yes, who is it?"

"It's Martha."

"What do you want?" *What do I want?*

"I'm here to interview Spike,"

Silence. I knew it, he changed his mind.

"Come on up." Whew.

I walked into the spacious office that used to be a fire station and I was greeted at the door by a gentleman who I took for the accountant since he immediately sat down at a desk and started fooling with

a calculator. Two sisters were sitting at their desks and as I looked down the length of the office I saw Spike. He was sitting on the stairs of a slightly raised platform, looking at some papers.

"Be right with you."

I sat down on a futon couch that was too deep to sit comfortably. Alright, don't look like an idiot. I sat at the edge of the sofa so that my feet could touch the ground and I took out *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe. I knew that I'd have to go back to whatever it was I was attempting to read so I didn't even bother marking the page.

"Hi, how ya doin'?" Spike led me into

another room so that we could have some privacy and the interview began.

Spike has been called "a brave, original and prodigious talent," by the *New York Times*—uncompromising on the issues and in his beliefs. Raised in a family of creative people, constantly being exposed to a cultural environment, Spike says he chose filmmaking as his venue because it encompasses many different artistic elements—dance, writing, photography, acting and dance. When he was as young as five and six years old Spike used to visit his father, composer and jazz musician Bill Lee, at gigs in Greenwich Village. Music has always been an important part of his films, as can especially be heard on his latest film, *School Daze*. "From the start, I knew that I wanted all the idioms of Black music in this movie, all idioms. We've got spirituals, funk, R&B, go-go, jazz."†

One of the many unique aspects of a Spike Lee Joint, besides using his family in many of the productions, is his commitment to employing not only Black actors but Black production people as well. What a lot of people don't realize is that many so-called "Black" shows or movies do not have a concentration of people behind the scenes. Often, the only thing "Black" about a show is the person or people who you actually see—but the writers, producers and crew are almost always exclusively white.

When interviewed on a news-magazine program, *West 57th St.*, Spike was asked why he didn't have any white actors in his films. "I don't think that it's an issue. I think it's really a stupid question. White filmmakers never get asked when they're going to have some Black people or other minorities in their films. That question never comes up."

Quality roles for Black actors has always been a controversial issue, from the days of Amos 'n' Andy to the present. The film, *Hollywood Shuffle*, by Robert Townsend which came on the heels of *She's Gotta Have It*, addressed this issue of whether or not Black actors should take the (few) roles which are available and which are, more often than not, demeaning. Spike commented, "I liked his [Robert Townsend's] film a lot. Especially when I was auditioning for this film [*School Daze*]. Talent has never been the problem. We've always had the talent, it's just the opportunity [that's lacking] and for every role we had in this film, there were five other people who didn't get the part who could have done it . . .

We can kick and scream about these roles people take but when they're starving and gotta pay their rent . . . They felt that they had to make that choice." Although Spike has provided quality roles for Black actors, he is but one man.

Spike feels that one of the problems

concerning the quantity of positions for Black performers is the way the industry is set up. "The powers that be don't seem to want more than one black superstar at a time. They had Michael Jackson. The slid him out and brought in Prince. Had Richard Pryor up there. Slid him out and brought in Eddie Murphy. Slid him out and brought in Bill Cosby. Maybe it's because of the fear that they will get too powerful."*

While his first feature film, *She's Gotta Have It*, generally received critical acclaim, *School Daze* seems to be riddled with controversy, especially from within the Black community. Some people believe that many of the issues portrayed in the film do not really exist.

Many complaints about the film are centered around disapproval of Spike "airing the dirty laundry" of the African-American community. "That's the same thought that Bryant Gumble had . . . when he attacked me on the *Today Show*. He said the same thing—why air dirty laundry; why give away trade secrets? He hadn't even seen the film."

Some critics are concerned with the portrayal of the Black college or university. Historically, most Black colleges were created by white philanthropists in order to provide education for the sons and daughters of former slaves (some of whom were also their sons and daughters). Given the connection to "white" money it is not surprising that many of these colleges are by nature politically conservative. This is no secret, yet still many protested when Spike projected this image in the film. At the same time, the relationship the production of *School Daze* had with the administration and students in the Atlanta University Center showed the very existence of an air of conservatism.

While *School Daze* was half-way through the shoot, the colleges of the Atlanta University Center decided not to let filming continue for several reasons—mainly because they thought that *School Daze* would give Blacks and Black colleges a bad name. Rumors were flying that there were sex scenes being filmed in the trailers and that one of the roles in the film was that of a prostitute. Surprisingly, or maybe not, is that the students supported the administration's actions—if not actively, then by their overwhelming silence and belief of the "propaganda" put forth by the administrators. Commenting on Atlanta University Center student apathy Spike sees it as "the mood today—graduate, get a job and make money."

In his book, *Uplift the Race: The Construction of School Daze*, Spike speaks to the issue of Black colleges: "I'm all for Black colleges. I'm a third generation Morehouse man and I hope my sons choose Morehouse. But there are certain

things wrong at Black colleges and I address some of them in *School Daze*. To me, this doesn't mean that I'm putting forth a negative portrayal of these institutions. The AUC presidents were after squeaky clean images of Black colleges. I refuse to be caught in the "negative image" trap that's set for Black artists. Yes, Black people have been dogged in the media from day one. We're extrasensitive and we have every right to be. But we overreact when we think that every image of us has to be 100 percent angelic—Christ-like even."

The first scene in the movie is an anti-apartheid rally being held in front of the Administration Building as the president of the fictitious Mission College and a disapproving chairman of the board watch from an upper window. One critic, Dalton Narine, in a *Village Voice* piece, thought that with a little less "boogaloo" Lee would have been able to resolve this South African issue. Lee comments: "I think that that's all we had to do—to raise it . . . People want that stuff to be resolved in the film; that stuff's not resolved in real life—how's it going to be resolved in the film?"

The portrayal of the women characters has not exactly won Spike any praise either—some critics labeling him a sexist and misogynist. Several grievances are about the amount of time spent on the Gamma Rays as compared to the amount of time spent on the Jigs; the way the camera pans up-and-down the bodies of the Gamma Rays; how the Jigs don't seem to do anything other than lay on the bed and talk about guys; how the women seem to merely be extensions of the male characters with whom they are involved and just a general lack of character development of the women. It seems, also, that the main conflict of the color and class issue rests on the shoulders of the female characters—it is between the women that most of the conflicts occur; even though there is a scene where the two main male and female "dark-skinned" characters ("Rachel" played by Kyme, and "Dap" played by Larry Fishburne) confront the possibility that one of the reasons "Dap" is dating "Rachel" is because she is "one of the darker sisters on campus."

On one hand these issues are very real and it does seem as if women are getting that same old sexist rap thrown on them. However, to a certain extent, the film's context of fraternity life could hardly allow for much correction—especially in the portrayals of the Gamma Rays and their relationships with the men. "That's the way these guys [in the Gamma Phi Gamma fraternity] in *School Daze*—that's the way a lot of these guys in fraternities feel about women. They just pass them around. [People] want to attack me

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NAPOLEON JONES-HENDERSON: AFRICOBRA



Photo by Mike Harris

SO WE TO EXHIBITION FOR SOWETO AT UNITED NATIONS, 1979: AFRICOBRA



WATER SPIRITS

JAMES PHILLIPS: AFRICOBRA



<<Eddy (a homeless man) said to me, "I know what you kids must be thinking about us, but we're not bums — we're alcoholics.">>

Left, David Daggett

<< These pictures were taken in the Boston area; some were taken candidly. For some, the individuals gave me their permission. They exemplify the pain and plight of the homeless. >>



<<I bought him a bottle of the cheapest whiskey I could see. As I gave him the bottle (similar to giving a drowning man a glass of water), I didn't know whether to think if I was doing something good or bad. >>

<< Walking back to the car, I had realized that some of the homeless people weren't there by choice. They were people who had stumbled into a hole, a hole that they could not climb out of. >>

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL:

Better to Light a Candle than Curse the Darkness



Art by Isabelle Sulek

anger—but we feel helpless as well. What can be done? As citizens of a free society, we can protest and editorialize our opinions among ourselves, but what actual good would that do, except for maybe venting some steam? You could redress your grievances to the governments themselves, but what good will one small, albeit intelligent, voice accomplish? Not much at all. But Amnesty International has taken the idea of protest and turned it into a possibility, a justifiable response that can be shared by many of the same voice in union.

Twenty-five years ago two Portuguese students sat in a tavern and toasted to freedom. For this act their government sentenced them to seven years' imprisonment. A group of people from many countries were outraged by the government's response and were moved to action. Thus, the beginning of Amnesty International was underway.

Amnesty International was founded in 1961 under the premise that "governments must not deny individuals their basic human rights." Amnesty is a non-partisan, worldwide network of volunteers that works to end human rights abuses everywhere. Today, the organization has over 500,000 members, all committed to initiating effective measures against inhumane treatment of other world citizens.

Amnesty works on a principle of impartiality, that is, independence of all outside interests except that of upholding the standards of human rights. Specifically, the organization refers to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights to justify their actions: Article 3—"Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person;" Article 5—"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;" and Article 9—"No one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile."

When Amnesty's London office is informed through various sources, such as newspapers, humanitarian organizations, or letters from attorneys and families of those in danger, their research department assesses the case to determine if action should be taken. Providing that the individuals have neither used nor advocated violence in any way, Amnesty will assist them in their struggle.

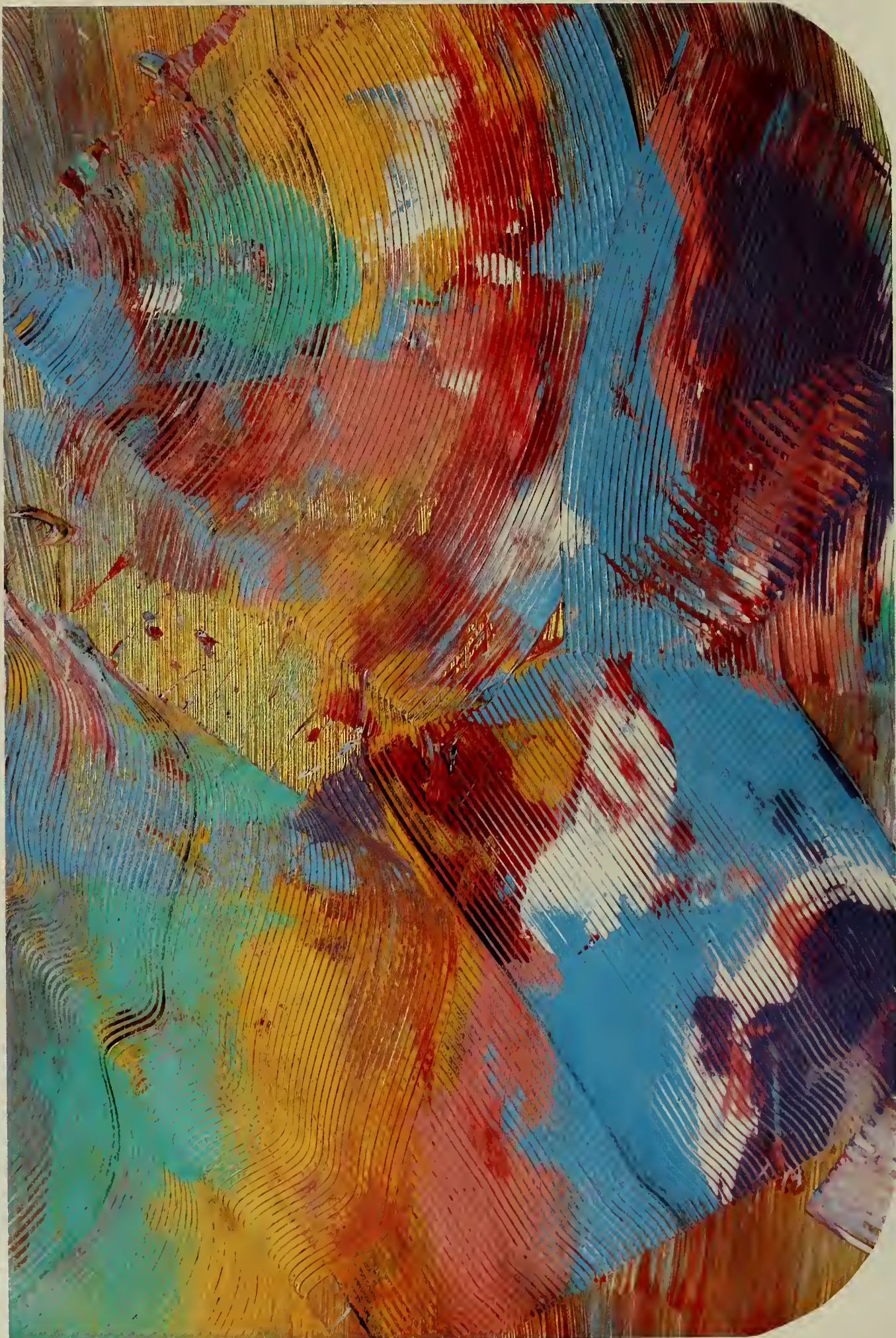
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"For years I was held in a tiny cell. My only human contact was with my torturers . . . my only company were the cockroaches and mice . . . on Christmas Eve the door to my cell opened and the guard tossed in a crumpled piece of paper. It said, 'Take heart. The world knows you are alive. We're with you. Regards, Monica, Amnesty International.' That letter saved my life." — a released prisoner from Paraguay

Just think. Right now there are thousands of people around the world who are being imprisoned, tortured, and killed solely on the basis of their color, sex, ethnicity and ideology. We can't always see it because human oppression rarely ever receives the attention that it should. But it exists, and it's a fact of life that many face every day.

These individuals, who are victims of persecution which often lacks legal pretense, are termed "prisoners of conscience"—stripped of their rights as human beings for who they are and what they believe.

When we stop what we're doing and consider the atrocities and abominations that our fellow humans suffer at the hands of tyrannical dictators of oppressive governments, we can't help but feel



ASCENDING SPIRIT SERIES

ADGER W. COWANS : AFRICOBRA 95

EQUALITY BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY (cont'd from 43)

ploded and frustration set in as these questions were debated until three in the morning. Finally, after much back and forth argument, we decided to remain and continue the vigilance. However, this decision had no time to cool before debate ensued about the amount of support we would have if we continued. Would the Third World community continue to support the cause, or would we have to fly the flag of surrender? Would we actually gain more by staying or lose some of what we had? The possibility of jail was not an immediate concern, for we had already faced a bomb threat without fear. The decision was finally made to leave the next day. We adjourned that night, exhausted.

Twelve noon, February 17, sunny, cold. We stood on the steps of New Africa House and sang the Black national anthem. Some were disappointed and some said we gave up the fight while others made it clear that the struggle was just beginning.

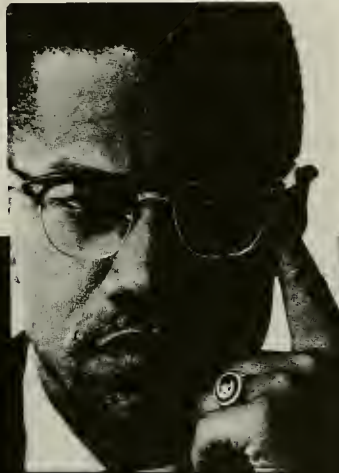
As we filtered off, going our separate ways, it was impossible not to look back on the past five days and say much of it hadn't been fun. The meetings were necessary, but stressful, and often brought normally controlled tempers to a head. However, they were sidelined often by the spirit and fun of just being together. Whether it was watching movies or studying, the sense of unity was overwhelming. Never had I seen so many people in such a stressful situation treat each other with such enormous respect. It was as if the factionalism within our community for five days just never existed. At least, for a brief moment, we had acted as one.

Although there is still much work to be done and many details to follow up with the administration, the occupation showed that there is strength in numbers and that a people will not continually allow themselves to be oppressed. The time had come when we as students of color could no longer stand by and allow racial harassment go unpunished. We

have pushed hard to get what should have rightfully been ours from the start, and we have pushed hard to be able to live in peace. If all this pressure has been too light, we will push even harder until the wall of injustice come tumbling down. Perhaps the immortal Malcolm X said it best: "The students all over the world are the ones who bring about a change, and it will, be by any means necessary."

Author's note: The preceding piece on the occupation of New Africa House from February 12-17 is not intended to be a blow by blow account. It was written to get a sense of perhaps the most important aspect of the occupation: people's emotions. It is in the mind that new ideas and emotions are harbored and it would be incomplete to speak of the occupation as simply a mechanical process. It was an event that was kept afloat by the feelings and emotions of an oppressed people.

Simone Nicholson is a UMass sophomore Journalism major.



Many a time I sit and wonder why
This race so, so very hard to run
Then I say to my soul take courage
Battle to be won
Like a ship that's tossed and driven
Battered by the angry sea yeah!
Say the tide of time was raging
Don't let the fury fall on me, No, No, No

—Bob Marley, "I Know," from *Confrontation* (Island Records, 1983)

Professor Chinua Achebe, world-renowned Nigerian author of the novels *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer At Ease*, *A Man of the People*, *Arrow of God* and, the latest, *Anthills of the Savannah*, is Visiting Professor at the University of Massachusetts this year.

Prof. Achebe, the first question I would like to ask is how would you define African literature?

Well, it's simply literature written by Africans. My definition is very simple, perhaps too simple, but it is the one that makes the best sense. Surely it cannot be things written about Africa because somebody *else* can write about Africa. [Joseph] Conrad has written about Africa, but I would not call *Heart of Darkness* part of African literature; so I would say it is literature written by those people we know as Africans.

In *Transition* 18, vol.4 (1965) you wrote an article concerning English and the African writer. In it you discussed that in June of 1962, during an African writers conference, African artists failed to define satisfactorily "African Literature." And you further mentioned the harsh words of a Nigerian critic, Obi Wali, writing in *Transition* 10, who said: "Perhaps the most important achievement of the conference . . . is that African literature as now defined and understood leads nowhere." Does one still find such critique of African literature, even after its twenty or so years of growth?

Yes, yes. Well, as a matter of fact, there was a period of silence, if you like, on that very issue for years. Obi Wali himself, who was a teacher of literature and a poet, stopped writing or saying anything or doing anything on this matter. And nor did anyone else until quite recently when Ngugi wa Thiong'o of Kenya had brought the subject back to life, with a vengeance, by making it almost the center of dispute. He is questioning the validity of anything which is written in European languages qualifying as African literature, and is saying, quite clearly, that it is not. It could be Afro-Saxon literature or whatever. And he concluded this by himself, deciding that he would not write in English anymore. So it [such critique] is very much alive today.

Now, I personally think that this is an issue upon which Ngugi or anybody else can take position and begin to act it out. I myself do not see that it is necessary or, in fact, useful to Africa for us to abandon communication in European metropolitan languages for practical reasons. The practical reasons are that these languages are the languages of Africa today, and literature cannot ignore today. Literature cannot see into the future. We can be thinking of a future in which the situation is altered or modified; in which, perhaps, some African languages become internationally spoken and written and, perhaps, will ultimately displace the European languages, but that's very much in the far future. For the moment Africans must stay alive. Africans must communicate, must talk to one another. African countries like Nigeria must continue to talk within Nigeria; we wouldn't be able to do this without English today. So this is a very complex problem, the question of language, and I don't think it will go away. But it's going to be solved, I think, over a long period of time.

In that same article you mentioned that if Europeans are bothered by this tremendous upsurge of African literature, of literature written by Africans in European languages, then that is too bad. You wrote, "The price of a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use."

Yes. Yes, I said that in '65; and although it was a long time ago, I think it is still true. Incidentally, only last week there was a program concerning my new novel [*Anthills of the*

Chinua Owner o



Photo by Garry Weas

Savannah) on the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), and I noticed a tone of irritation in one of the voices discussing the book. The central topic was concerning my use of 'pidgin' English, a local variety of English spoken in West Africa, and this Englishman seemed to be a little irritated. He had difficulty with the pidgin sections of this novel, and the man he was talking with rather condescendingly explained to him that the people about whom I am writing do, in fact, speak pidgin and that it would be inappropriate for me to represent them in any other way. So, in other words, there are people in Britain who are a little unhappy that the English language, which they feel they have a kind of proprietary right over, is being used in all kinds of ways. This, you see, is what I mean by the voice of irritation. I also remember an Australian poet (the Australians can be as conservative as the English, you see—they also feel

Achebe: f Words

that this is their special tongue) who was saying that he feels rather envious of little countries, like Denmark, which still have control over their language and that when one Dane says something, another Dane understands what he is saying. By implication this Australian is complaining that English has gone out of control. And I say, too bad! That's just too bad.

*Professor [Michael] Thelwell, in preparation for this interview, gave me several articles, most of which discuss your latest novel, **Anthills of the Savannah**. In the **African Guardian**, Sept. 24, 1987, Okey Ndibe writes that "**Anthills** is the first major study in African literature of the phenomenon of military rule." Would you please discuss this further?*

Well, the story is set, very squarely, in a military regime in Africa; so I am dealing with the leadership, the military leadership, and the kind of problems created in an African country by that sort of regime. I am also dealing with the development of tyranny and with a new awareness after the devastation which happens. This new awareness is based on the survivors learning to make new links with the ordinary roots of the society, with the ordinary people of the country. This, I think, is the positive side of this tragedy. At the end of it all there are the survivors, the anthills; they are the anthills and the product which I am exploring here. The anthills survive after the fire has burned the Savannah. There is this proverb which says it is the anthills which survive into the next season so as to tell the grass, the new grass, of what happened the year before. So this is the meaning of the story; the people survive the tragedy, carry the misery of what happened, so that they can instruct the new grass, the new people, and transmute experience to the future.

Last year you declined an invitation to The Second African Writers Conference in Stockholm (April of 1986). Could you elaborate upon your reasons for doing so and, therefore, upon your opinions of the existence of such a conference?

Yes. Well, let me say that I also declined the first one which, I think, was held in 1967. Now, my reasons are very clear. I am not opposed to conferences on African literature anywhere; anybody can set up a conference on African literature and even invite Africans to come and talk to them. But I resent the idea of African writers being summoned to a European country and being told that the purpose of this is for them to view the past and the future of their literature. This seems to me to go beyond the desire of everybody to find out about African literature; this is as if you want to draw the plan for African literature of the future, and you are going to Stockholm, under the supervision and hospitality of the Swedes, to do it! And I find this abhorrent; I find it unacceptable. By 1986 Africans, if they want to view their future literature, should do it under their own hospices and in their own forum, under their own control. And nobody has any right, not even if they dispense the Nobel Prize, to summon us somewhere and look over our shoulders while we draw our plans.

*Here, in 1974-75 for the Chancellor's Lecture Series, you discussed the false image of Africa projected by colonial literature such as Conrad's **Heart of Darkness**. How widely*

spread is this false image of Africa in the west?

It is very, very wide. You know, I'll tell you that when I gave that lecture here, it was a bit of a bombshell. To my amazement Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* probably was one of the most widely prescribed books within the English department—I don't know what the situation is today—and I caused some offense in some quarters of some very conservative professors. There was one, in particular, who really was angry and was obliged to tell me off. But fortunately there were others, in fact more, who said something like, "You know, we never really read or understood that book until we heard you." Now when a professor of English says, "I never really read Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* until I heard you," you know something very, very serious is happening. In other words, it is so natural to the West to think of Africa in these terms that they don't even know that something false is happening. And this has been going on for so long. It is a long period of indoctrination in the white world that black is evil. And so [Conrad's image] is widespread, but I think it is important that we should begin to address ourselves, to confront it, and bring it to an end.

Colonial literature must, then, present some sort of conflict for those Africans who study at European universities where they are exposed to such misrepresentations of Africa.

Well, it is from this conflict that the resolution can come. It is, in fact, good when Africans go to universities they confront these texts. My own conversion, if I may call it that, happened in the university. It wasn't in Europe; it happened to be in the first university in Nigeria, the University of Ibadan. But all my teachers were English, and they didn't teach me any African literature, they taught me works like those of Conrad's. And it was my own development and the development of other people of my own generation that began to question this literature that we were given and to conceive of a possibility of creating an alternative story, which is really the genesis of African literature, if you want to put it crudely. We wanted an alternative story because the story we were given was not satisfactory. And, really, no people can have their story told by other people, which gets back to what I was saying about going to Sweden to map out the development of African story. We are telling the story of Africa, and this story has to be told by us in our own environment.

*As you know, Janheinz Jahn's **Muntu**, an outline of traditional African culture, is widely embraced among Black Americans. What are your sentiments toward such an overwhelming acceptance of this study of Africa by this German?*

[A chuckle] Well, I have to be careful here because I knew Janheinz Jahn personally, but I had certain disagreements with something he had written after a journey through parts of Africa. He was the kind of man who wanted to systematize things, to put things into pigeon holes—I think this is, perhaps, a German kind of tendency. The Germans, I think, like to have things neat in their minds, and they want to put things in order to give them a set shape—so, when I came to *Muntu*, I came to it with a certain ambivalence. But I think, today, I would be inclined to say that there is really no harm in somebody who, out of extensive reading and study and out of some natural tendency to place things in order, presents us with something like *Muntu*. We should, at least, have an open mind and look at it and see what it is he is trying to do, because what he's trying to do is to extract, from a multitude of African cultures and languages, a system of unity that applies everywhere. Now, every one of us knows that there is something like unity in Africa; if you travel in Africa, you know this. People say to me everywhere I go in Africa that the story of *Things Fall Apart* could be a Kikuyu story or Luo

or Ndebele. So it is clear that there are certain underlying unities in Africa. Muntu may not succeed completely in illustrating this, but it is an important first step. We should not sneer at it. And further, since Black Americans seem to have taken to it, there is something in it which we can use.

Professor Achebe, I am seeking, now, a link between Black American and African artists. Langston Hughes in an essay entitled "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," wrote on the perpetuation of Black culture and of the duty of the young Black American artist: "But, to my mind, it is the duty of the younger Negro artist, if he accepts any duties at all from outsiders, to change through the force of his art that old whispering 'I want to be white,' hidden in the aspirations of his people, to 'Why should I want to be white? I am a Negro—and beautiful!'" Would you speak on your ideals as to the duty of the younger African artist?

Well, having heard that beautiful excerpt from Langston Hughes, I really don't want to add to it because I think it speaks not just for the black people here but for black people everywhere. There is that love, that hidden love of white people, which is often present in our minds while we criticize and attack them for what they have done to us. The aspiration to be like them or to be under their control is so deep and so offending to our ultimate goals and interests that I would also prescribe words such as Hughes'. What the excerpt is saying is integrity. Who am I? . . . I am not white . . . So I am black and I belong to this place called Africa . . . There are other people there . . . There are counties there . . . There are needs and aspirations there . . . There is a history, even, there . . . It is a history which is older, perhaps than any other history in the world . . . Why don't we pay more attention to that rather than what they may be doing and thinking in America or doing and thinking in Russia or in China? All this is important; we want to know the rest of the world. But we must

not do it at a cost of ourselves, of discovering ourselves. I think that this is a universal duty for people who are oppressed because they must discover themselves and be themselves before they can shake off the oppressor. You can't shake off oppression if you are working on the side of the oppressor; you've got to put yourself on the other side, opposed to him, in order to relieve yourself. This is what I mean by integrity. An artist who is copying somebody else, maybe even another artist, is not an artist yet; he is an apprentice. He becomes an artist when he discovers his own voice and knows who he is. Then we have an artist.

Professor Achebe was interviewed on October 20, 1987 by Charles H. Perry who is a junior English major at the University.



IN THE BELL OF THE HORN NELSON STEVENS

COACHING EXCELLENCE (cont'd from 40)

He pauses, and poised, touching his fingers together, he continues. "In Africa, when you leave home you represent your village. Wherever I go, whatever I do, I make my mother and father and my village look good."

This ideology is brought to every event or game. "The women who play for me have to make decisions representing me."

"It's not winning that matters, it's the time you spend training, working long hours, sacrificing. The winners are the people who turn bad days into good. It's important to work harder, to seek a better way of working. Look at yourself in the mirror each day when you arise, and if you don't like what you see, then you have an obligation to yourself to do something about it."

That desire for excellence had him packing up his achievements and moving across town to Amherst College, a school one twentieth the size of UMass, with half the athletic programs.

"I wasn't looking to move, really. I always kept open, you know. I actually interviewed by chance. I was so busy with my work here I almost didn't apply. But,

friends said, 'Why don't you apply and give it a shot?' they kept pressing. The job became more and more interesting, so I applied."

And he got that job, along with a salary increase and a more sophisticated title.

"Well, my title will be 'head coach of men's and women's cross-country and track and field/program coordinator,' which is attractive." He laughs at the slash in his title, but admits the job will allow him more responsibility and potential.

Banda says he is glad to have been associated with UMass, but he's proud of now being associated with Amherst. "It's a privilege to be associated with Amherst, it's second to none. It's an association that any professional would want. UMass strives for excellence, Amherst practices it."

To some UMass students and faculty, Banda's leaving for Amherst College seems like a sellout, a slap in the face to an institution that is constantly trying to better its reputation of mediocrity.

Banda doesn't see it that simply; most people in his position would certainly

have done the same thing. He has worked hard at UMass, and is now willing to take a promotion, along with new challenges. It was time to move on, upward.

He thinks people are misled if they think he is moving down a step in his athletic recruitment. "If you have good coaching, the athletes will come. Amherst has high academic standards. You can't down play excellence. NCAA doesn't make it or break it."

Banda says many people ask him if he will miss coaching women's soccer. "Yes and no. Of course I enjoyed working with the women. I have helped to prepare them as good human beings, to teach them to respect themselves and others. Self-respect of body, mind, and soul is the most important thing in life. No matter what happens — win or lose, you are the champion. These women will soon graduate and take what they have learned to start lives for themselves."

Mark T. Childs will be graduating in May with a bachelor's degree in English.

INTERVIEW WITH KANDULA SITA RAMA SASTRY

Born in the State of Andhra Pradesh, India, Kandula S.R. Sastry completed his high school and college education in his home state. He received his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Physics with the highest honors from Andhra University, Waltair, India, in 1955 and 1956, respectively. Inspired by exciting developments in fundamental physics, he came to the United States of America and did his graduate studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, and received the doctoral degree in Physics in 1962. He has been an active member of the faculty of Physics and Astronomy, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, for the past 25 years. He is author of over 60 papers in his area of research, and has taught students ranging from the freshman to the doctoral level. His recent research on the biological effects of esoteric atomic and nuclear processes have received worldwide acclaim.



Professor Sastry, what motivated you to pursue a career in Physics?

Well, when I was a student in high school, my teachers brought to my attention a lot of exciting things about nature, and certainly physics is a very basic science of nature, and I got very much attracted to that. My father was a physicist and my brother and uncles were scientists and mathematicians. So I was very much attracted to this field. [I chose nuclear physics because] at the time of my growth a lot of exciting events were happening in the field, not just nuclear energy. I am certainly not thrilled by the atomic bomb. . . . I abhor it!!! Right from the beginning, I did not like it, and there are many nuclear physicists who totally oppose it too. But, nevertheless, the fundamental science of nuclear physics was very exciting. By nuclear physics I mean: how is the atomic nucleus constituted,

what are the laws that govern the motion of protons and neutrons inside the nucleus? — that was an unsolved puzzle at that time which even now we don't understand that well.

What is your area of research in nuclear physics?

Well, I have worked on a variety of areas. First of all, . . . Yang and Lee. At that time, one of the most exciting things was a field called Nuclear Beta Decay. This is when a nucleus transforms from one element to another. That got me excited, and I did a lot of research in that area. Afterwards, I did research on the mechanisms of nuclear reactions, and after that I also studied various aspects of how to determine the properties of excited states of nuclei. By understanding this, we get kind of a handle as to how to understand the box that we call the nucleus.

More recently I [have been] investigating the biological effects of ionizing radiation. By that I mean how it damages cells and how it damages important DNA in cells. You know there is cancer and ionizing radiation may cause cancer, [however] it can also be used to cure cancer and we have come across a very exciting idea of utilizing some very fundamental physics as a possible application in the cure of cancer.

How old were you, and what were some of your feelings during the Independence of India movement led by Mohandas K. Gandhi?

Well, certainly, I was a young kid. In the year 1942, when Gandhi raised the slogan "Quit India," I was seven years old but still I could hear that. I remember "Quit India" and the various struggles that went on at that time. And it certainly inspired us a lot, and as I grew older and went to middle school and high school, Gandhi was of course the towering personality which had created an influence on us.

What are your feelings about Gandhi's tactics toward bringing independence to India — particularly his non-violent techniques?

Well, I think Gandhi gave us the guiding light. Violence is not the way to achieve the ends, and the ends do not justify the means, and that is what Gandhi taught us. He felt very unhappy when violence erupted as a result of his fasting and all. All of this inculcated in many of us a spirit of non-violence, a sense of self-criticism and self-restraint, but also an abiding commitment to our cause. And certainly today, I have grown with that and I am a pacifist, and I believe in non-violence. Of course, the most important contribution Gandhi made — not just to the Third World, but to the entire world — is the idea of fighting for your rights in a peaceful and non-violent manner, of non-cooperation and civil disobedience — especially when you believe that your rights are more than what the law [says]. Martin Luther King, Jr. did the same thing, and I admire [him] as well.

Photo by Victor Alexander

continued on page 75



Music is Cultural Power

Jane Sapp

Her voice sweet with emotion, Jane Sapp sits at her piano rocking rhythmically from side to side to the blues song she is singing, her hands snapping the keys and her feet stomping on the pedals. Recently, while on the University of Massachusetts campus, Ms. Sapp talked about her life her work and her music.

Ms. Sapp, a gospel singer and cultural organizer is a native of black Augusta, Georgia. She says her involvement with her community and music started when she was a child. She explains, "My roots are in the south and in the Black community. The Black church shaped what I do. That gave me a special kind of grounding."

Ms. Sapp grew up hearing, learning and singing church songs as well as popular rhythm and blues. At age nine while still in school she began playing the piano for several church choirs, as well as writing her own songs. By the time Jane was 12, she was the pianist and director for two gospel choirs. As she matured her social and musical interest became more serious. "The most profound impact on my world view has been the fact that I was born Black in the mid-twentieth century in the United States."

Ms. Sapp's concern and music, however, extend beyond the local realities of her black community, into an ecumenical concern for the oppressed.

"My life has been shaped by the experience of social and political injustice and by the courage, wisdom, struggle and humanity of those who are the 'have-nots' of this country, of this world. My work [and] my music, are rooted in these experiences and communities."

Ms. Sapp has had a long history of working for her people, to preserve and to keep their richness of Black culture. Her concern with the educational and empowering resource of the traditional 'folk' music has sent her throughout the South documenting the life of the Black community. She has organized several Folk Roots Festivals and Family Union Days, in addition to other programs which celebrate the strength and vitality of local communities.

In recent years, Ms. Sapp has participated as both a field researcher and board member in the African Diaspora Program at the Smithsonian's Institutions Festival of American Folklife. While working in Green County, Alabama, she also directed the Community based cultural Education Program at Miles College, Eugaw, where she organized a major folklife program in black belt Alabama and Mississippi. When not making musical appearances, Ms. Sapp says she enjoys keeping busy at the Highlander Center, located in New Market, Tennessee. The Highlander Center is a center with a 50-year history of working with poor and disenfranchised people throughout the South.

In addition to her accomplishments as a cultural organizer, Ms. Sapp has been equally successful in the music world. Concert appearances have taken Ms. Sapp all over the United States. She has performed at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival, the Hudson River Revival, the John Henry Memorial Festival, Sisterfire, the World's Fair Folklife Center, the Village Vanguard and the Cathedral Church of St. John of the Divine. She has recently performed in concert with Pete Seeger at Carnegie Hall and the People's Church in Chicago. In 1985, her album "Take a Look at My People" won a first place Indie Award from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors.

Her power as a cultural organizer is only equalled by her explosive stage performances. Her songs have a social awareness range, from her fiery protest of oppression and exploitation, to her compassionate lullaby embracing the blues.

The performance Ms. Sapp gave at the University of Massachusetts, commemorating national Black History Month, was a display of her dedication to the music and culture of her people.

With a friendly smile Ms. Sapp addressed an audience of over two hundred people. "My roots are in the South and in the Black community. The Black community and church are the forces that shaped very early on in my life, born and raised from the bottom." She then dedicated a song to all those people "at the bottom" called, "Remember Me."

As Ms. Sapp continued singing and playing the piano she invited her listeners to sing along, to help strengthen the spiritual bond forming in the crowded theater. The songs in her repertoire reflect her political beliefs and hope about the future of the world.

Her song "Welcome Table" is a hopeful song dedicated to the students in her workshops. *I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these times.*

Ms. Sapp told the audience about her work with children in Selma, Alabama. She said she was impressed by their songs which reflected social awareness and pride for not only being themselves, but also for being Black. "When you love yourself, you don't have to go around doing horrible things," she added, before singing joyously, *Black is so beautiful, and it is so beautiful to be Black.* She explained that the children had expanded the verses to include all colors, all people in the world.

"Jesus That's Love," she explained, "is like a marching-into-battle song. To know that someone is there to help you push ahead." It is a gutsy gospel song. *Jesus that's love.--God's got his arms wrapped all around me. You know I've got Jesus that's enough.*

In concert Ms. Sapp likes to pay tribute to leaders in the struggle to gain freedom from the evils of racism, such as Harriet Tubman and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Encouraging the crowd to clap and sing along with her, she sang a powerful rendition of "We Shall Not Be Moved," dedicating it to the students who occupied the New Africa House from February 12-17th, as a response to the racial climate on campus.

Ms. Sapp talked about the importance of fighting for dreams of freedom, making them a reality. She put the great poet Langston Hughes poem, "What Happens to a Dream Deferred?" into sweet music.

"We've got to remember what freedom, peace, justice really mean. I ask myself in 1988, what does freedom look like, taste like, feel like. What does it mean to be free?"

As her performance came to a close, Ms. Sapp sang the title track from her album "Take a Look At My People." *Take a look at my people go tell the world a new nation is coming with strength and love to give the world a new humanity.* She said the song was written after working in South Carolina and trying to put together a museum on Black culture and history in the area. "I was overwhelmed by the history of Black people in America and it occurred to me what a beautiful people we are," she said with a smile.

As the concert ended with a jubilant "This Little Light of Mine," Ms. Sapp told the audience, "The time is coming for a new South, one not built on hatred and inhumanity." She went on to say, "the order is shifting people, the cultural and economic face of society is changing . . . search for [the] depth and dignity of each other. Seek the truth, cut beneath rhetoric, media hype, commercial images. I'm concerned about the lack of information about each other, about the history and culture that exists in different groups. Education is access to information without a hierarchy."

Mark Thomas Childs will be graduating in May with a bachelor's degree in English.

BLUESY KISSES WITH TABASCO SAUCE AND JIMMY REED

BY CHARLES CURTIS BLACKWELL

SING TO ME JIMMY
MAKE THE TABASCO SAUCE ROLL
ANOTHER ORDER OF NECKBONES
WITH GREASE AND GRAVY
AND ONE MORE JIMMY REED
THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL
WHEN I AM BLUE
MISSING YOU
ME MOANIN', AND JIMMY GROANIN'
MEMPHIS TO MISSISSIPPI
MOAN THE MORNIN'

PLAY FOR ME BABY, KISS ME MAYBE
THE TELEPHONE RANG, INTERRUPTED
MY CONCENTRATION
THREW MY MOANING OFF
RUBBING WOMAN'S THIGH
MY HAND ON IT
AS THE TWO OF US KISS
SHE MOANED
AND JIMMY MOANED FOR ME

ANNIVERSARY

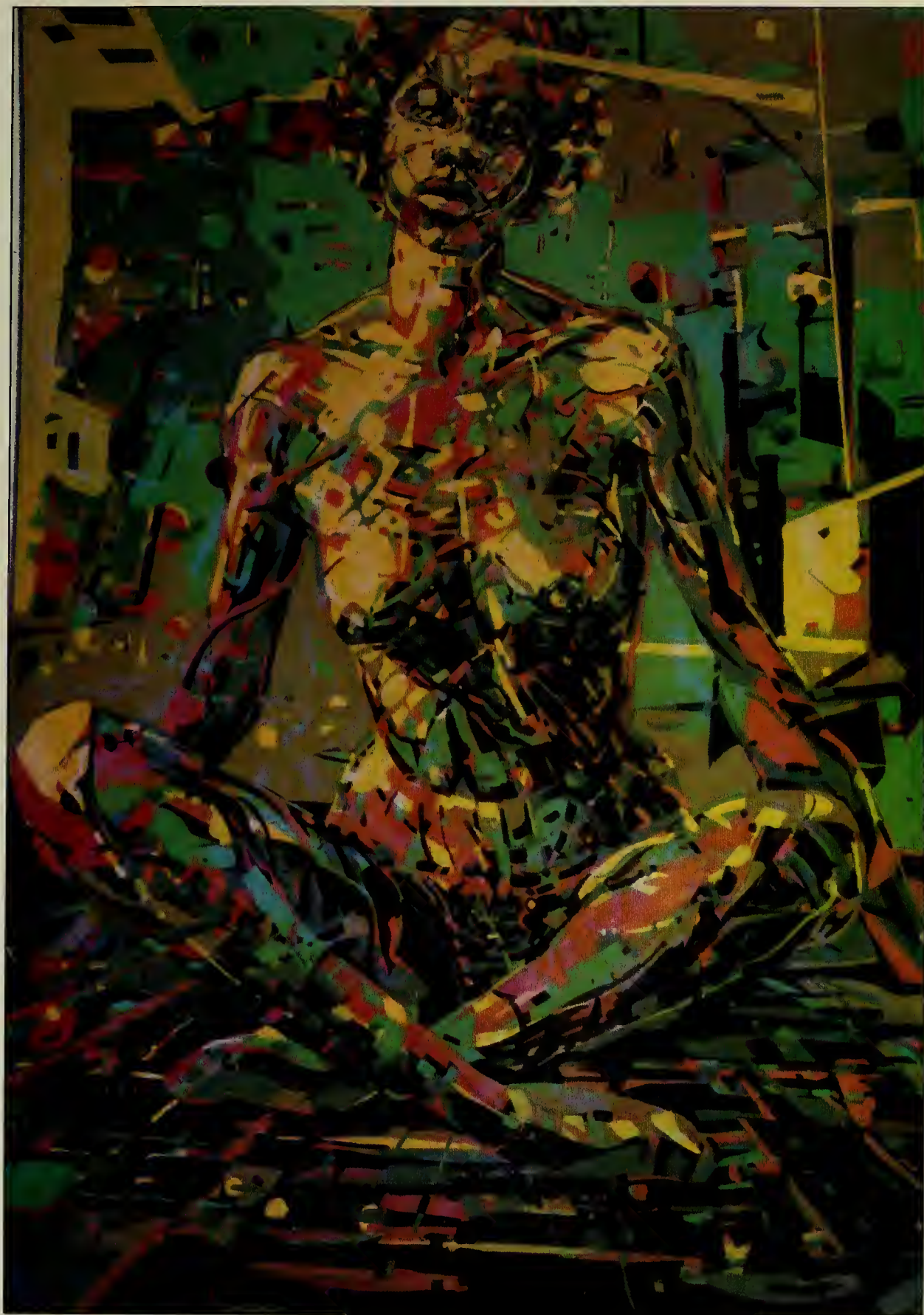
by Nancy Morejón

I had already cut ten roses for Vinnia
when I crossed the bantustón*
drowsy
with the undulating trill
of the roosters.
It was our first anniversary.
I was stopped.
I was questioned.
And I showed my pass.
The white morning light
was growing and growing
flooding the marketplace.
I walked breathlessly
all the way to the city.
A merchant runs after a female servant
offering her a crumpled dollar.
It was our first anniversary.
I was stopped.
I was questioned.
And I showed my pass.
Cars were going down.
Trucks were going up.
My heart was overflowing
on to the avenue.

The sun, even stronger,
like a frozen egg yoke.
I was stopped.
I was questioned.
And I showed my pass.
I arrived at Vinnia's bantustón
past six in the afternoon.
Looking and longing for her
I searched.
Vinnia, have you doubted me?
I left my bantustón early
but I was stopped.
I was questioned.
I showed my pass.
I traveled through a maze to arrive here.
I told her; lowering my head
like a thief who has been chastened.
Her expression was a mixture
of affliction and impatience.
Vinnia, so beautiful in front of her bantustón
but my roses had already withered.
It was our first anniversary.

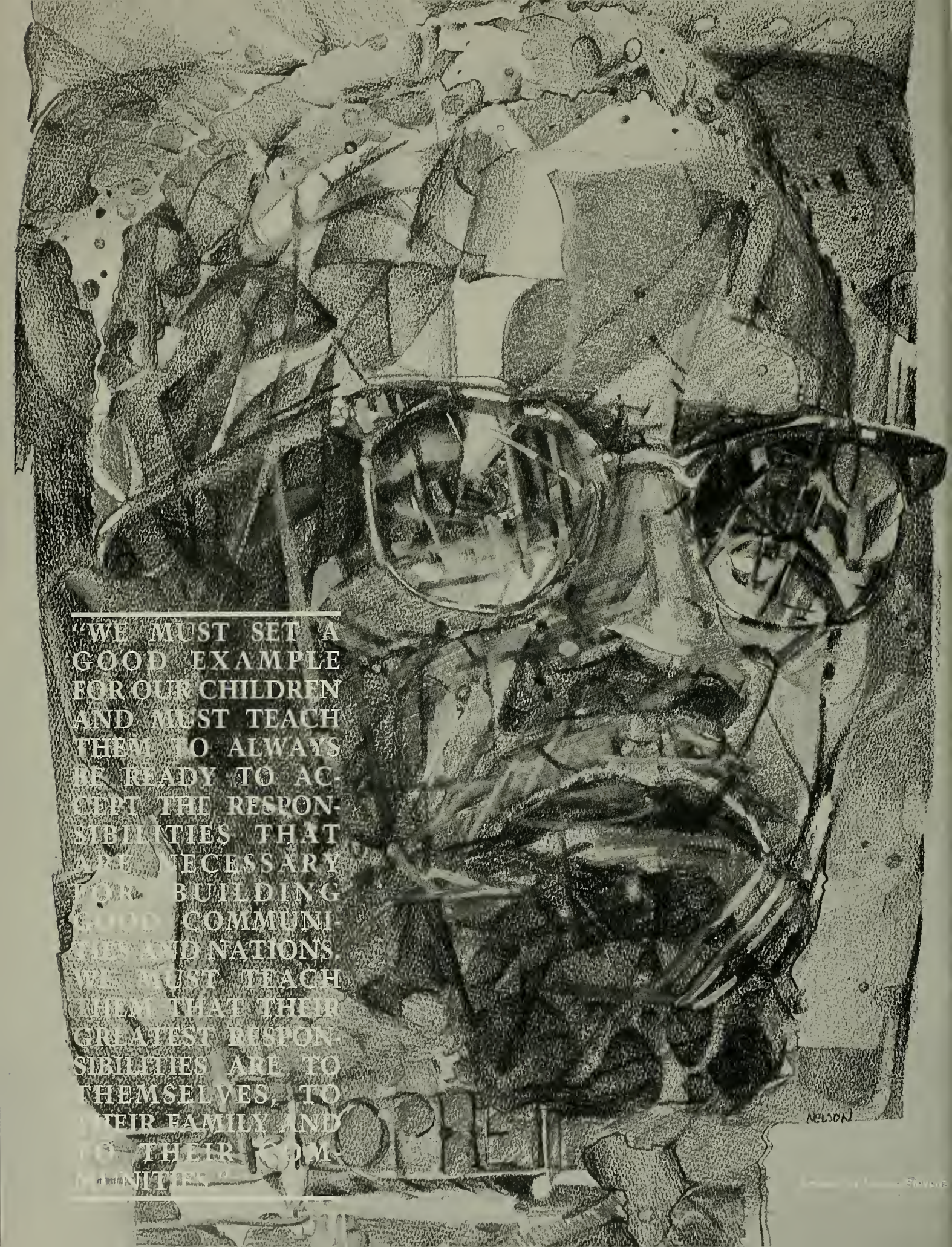
Translated by Mirtha N. Quintanales

* bantustón — a ghetto



OYA'S MEDITATION

NELSON STEVENS: AFRICOBRA



WE MUST SET A
GOOD EXAMPLE
FOR OUR CHILDREN
AND MUST TEACH
THEM TO ALWAYS
BE READY TO AC-
CEPT THE RESPON-
SIBILITIES THAT
ARE NECESSARY
FOR BUILDING
GOOD COMMUNI-
TIES AND NATIONS.
WE MUST TEACH
THEM THAT THEIR
GREATEST RESPON-
SIBILITIES ARE TO
THEMSELVES, TO
THEIR FAMILY AND
TO THEIR COM-

NEELSON

I AM BECAUSE WE ARE: Nelson Stevens

Art teaches. It tells us where we have been and where we are going—a visual chronicle of a people's history. But what is this entity called "art?" Does it hold the same value and function for all people? If you know anything about traditional African culture you know that art and community are inseparable. Art is not a separate entity—"for its own sake"—as it is in western culture. There is an organic tie, a reciprocal relationship, between the artist and society. The artist creates for the society to which he belongs, *even if it is a future society*. It is from this tradition that Nelson Stevens comes and it is in this vein that he works.

Nelson's art is a reflection of elements both physical and spiritual which have their grounding in the African-American experience. His rhythmical, multi-layered reassemblage of form and color can be likened to the quality of syncretism inherent in most aspects of our African-American culture. When we were brought over here, we were forced to give up our African culture and adopt a wholly different system of philosophy. But our captors were not entirely successful in destroying all that was African and much of what today is considered "American" is really African-American—religion, language, dance and music—a blend of two opposing systems into one.

Consider a comparison between western and African music. Traditionally, in western music the elements are arranged in a hierarchical structure. For instance, while a western piece of music might contain multiple rhythms, these rhythms are employed one at a time; as opposed to African music, which has several different rhythms going simultaneously, each one given an equitable level of importance. And if you listen to rock-n-roll there is no mistaking the influence of African music on this genre which so many still regard as an "American" phenomenon.

Music has always been a vital element in Nelson's work—both in the process of creation and in the final product. Anyone who knows Nelson also knows that the man just *love* John Coltrane. His love of music is communicated through his work. He has done paintings of Coltrane, Stevie Wonder, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Max Roach, Louis Armstrong and Bob Marley. An admirer once said that if a deaf person were to look at one of Nelson's pieces, that person would know what music sounded like.

Two other elemental themes in Nelson's work are: woman and creation and heroes/transformers. He speaks about his work. *It seems that my representational work can be divided into three main categories: one being the Creation series, having to do with the pelvic bone, dealing with Oya and Yemaya and the creation of the world, and the adoration of women through that series. The Ogun series—this is all Yoruba—having to do with the god of metal and iron. It's about music, musicians and the colors that flow when I want to represent the music I deal with. The music . . . sometimes gets representational. Duke Ellington's part of that, as well as Miles Davis and Louis Armstrong and several devotees of*

the music—that which nourishes us. The music series is really about nourishment from Ogun. The third series I call the Transformers, those people who have gone before us who have made a bigger space for the rest of us. I got a chance down at Tuskegee to really explore that one in depth. Starting with Cinque, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Frederick Douglass, Dr. [W.E.B.] Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, continuing on to deal with [Paul] Robeson, Martin Luther King [and] Malcolm X. The Bob Marley series is part of that, as well as the Stevie Wonder, as well as the Jesse Jackson. It's my way of giving tribute to those who have found the power and the will to give voice to the rest of us, and inspire.

Nelson says that he always had an interest in art. *The first place that I remember living was in a five-story apartment building, and we used to draw on the sidewalk outside the building. I was too young to go down the street too far, or up the street too far. I must have been 5, 6 or 7. We'd draw on the sidewalk with these colored chalks and go up on the roof and look down and see what they were like. And the girls would come and erase our stuff and put hopscotch.*

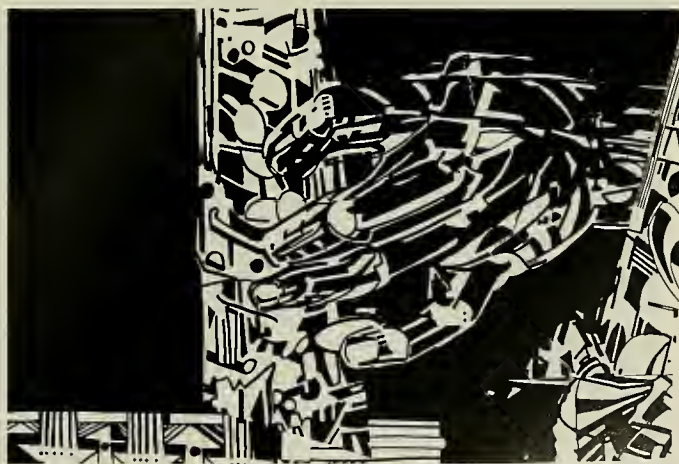
His parents' reactions to his artistic desires when he was young were different. *My mother wanted me to pursue art to the point that she enrolled me in classes at the Brooklyn Museum on Saturdays which I would sometimes cut to go to Ebbet's Field to see Jackie Robinson. And she encouraged me to go to the Museum of Modern Art because [they] had lessons; and I took lessons over there. His father exposed him to the realities of living an artistic life by taking him to Greenwich Village when he had to go there for work. Although the conditions he saw for artists were rough, Nelson saw it as an interesting way of life.*

At first Nelson went into the advertising industry but thought that he was too *pure* for it, so he decided to go into teaching. He taught elementary, junior high and high school in Ohio.

While working at the Cleveland Museum of Art Nelson made a conscious decision to be a serious artist. *When I started dealing with the painters themselves as opposed to interpretations of their work, then I could see clearly that there was something different than the conversations that were about their work. And when I could get to that point I decided to really seriously get in and start.*

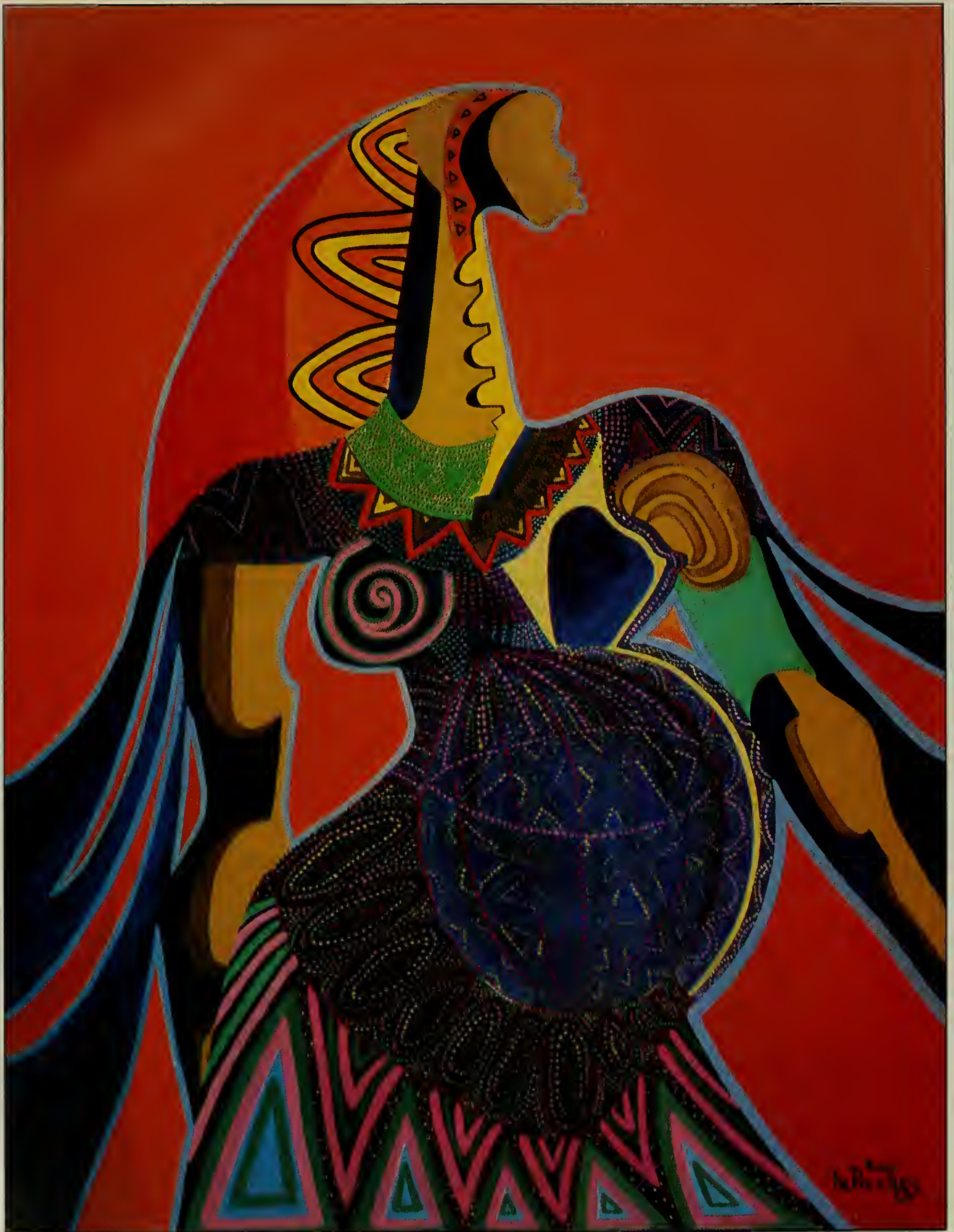
While in his early 20s he met other Black artists who were in the same situation of lacking real studio space in which to create—most of them would just roll back the rugs in their apartments. They rented a store front together for \$100 per month (\$10 each!) and established the Creative Workshop. *I picked up all of the techniques of everybody that worked there. We had people from the post office; people who taught*

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IN THE BELL OF THE HORN #7

NELSON STEVENS



CANDANCE

MURRY DePILLARS: AFRICOBRA



ASCENDING SPIRIT SERIES

ADGER W. COWANS: AFRICOBRA

Dr. Johnnetta Cole: FIRST LADY



Photo courtesy of Spelman College.

"Good afternoon, Spelman College."

"Hello, extension 201 please."

"President's Office, may I help you?"

"Hi. This is Rio Gabriel calling again, from DRUM Magazine. Is Dr. Cole available?"

"No, I'm sorry. She just returned from Washington and she's in conference. May I take a message?"

This is how the exchange between the appointment secretary and I had been occurring for five days in a row.

"No, that's okay. Um, could you ask her to call me as soon as possible please?"

"I don't know when that will be, Miss Gabriel. Dr. Cole is very busy this week. Hold on for one moment."

I figured that I would be put off once again and that I would never get to talk to the newly-appointed President of Spelman College. I was just about to give up completely when a strong, amiable voice returned to the phone.

"Rio!"

"Yes . . ."

"This is Dr. Cole. Unfortunately, I won't be able to speak with you at this time."

My heart sank. "That's oka--."

"Can you call me tonight at my home? I'll be up until one o'clock. That way we can spend as much time as you'd like on this interview."

Dr. Cole and I spoke for about twenty minutes to half an hour. She was very direct and to the point—this was not a woman to put up with any B.S. She thought very carefully about my questions before she responded. If I could have seen her, I was sure she would have been making a lot of hand gestures for emphasis. Here was a woman who was in one of the most prestigious positions at an equally prestigious institution; and she had given me her home phone number and spoken to me as though we were old friends.

Her voice is steady and compassionate. Perhaps it is due to the experience of growing up as a Black woman in the Jim Crow South of the 1940s. Perhaps it was leaving her home of Jacksonville, Florida at age 15 as an early-entrance student to Fisk University, that gave way to this voice. Nevertheless, I knew I was speaking to a voice that possessed a great amount of knowledge.

After one year at Fisk, Dr. Cole transferred to Overland College where she was 'turned on' to anthropology—a word she

says she could scarcely spell. From Overland, she went to Northwestern University where she completed Master's and Ph.D. degrees in Anthropology.

At this point in the conversation I was beginning to grasp why this was a voice of knowledge. The reasoning was simple. This woman was the sum total not only of the experience of growing up as a Black woman in white America, but also of three university degrees and years of field work in West Africa.

"At a very, very exciting and disturbing period in our history—it was the 60s—I became very, very involved in the Black Studies Movement as what I would call the intellectual arm of the Black Power Movement."

As part of this arm, Dr. Cole taught for seven years at Washington State University. At that time she was married with two sons. It was from there that she was recruited to come to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. After her thirteen years at UMass she went to Hunter College, and it was from the Hunter College position that she was selected to the presidency of Spelman College in Atlanta.

Her Years at UMass/Amherst

"I would not describe my years at UMass as years that were [racially] tension-free. I went there in 1970 [and] stayed for thirteen years. I would describe it as, in many ways, very typical of predominantly white campuses during the 70s. In other ways, I would describe UMass as atypically sensitive to some of its own problems. And I guess I even have a hypothesis that suggests that a certain amount of sensitivity to the problem simply opens one up to more of the problem. But it was a period of very intense organizing and activity—even though it was the seventies and not the sixties.

"I was a part, initially, of a very exciting department: The W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies. I felt myself very much at the core of what was going on in terms of the Black community in Amherst."

Her Experience at Spelman

"I some ways, and you'll have to forgive the metaphor, it's like the difference between night and day. In other ways, there are very striking similarities. That is to say, there is a certain culture of intellectual life. And that is not immune to race

and ethnicity and nationality; but it does have a certain core to it. And I think that exists at Spelman, no less than at UMass, Amherst, no less than at Harvard, no less than at Howard. And so there are ways in which things [at Spelman] are very similar [to UMass]. You talk about libraries; you engage in ideas; you have something called a faculty; there's a student union or a student center. So all of the trappings, and in some ways a great deal of the belief system, is there.

"But there are also ways in which [Spelman] is so strikingly different. For me, at this moment, it means I am in a setting where the majority of the people look like me; where race and gender are not defined in terms of 'the other.' In fact, I am in the majority. It is, very often, a startling experience. And it is amazing how one adjusts to it, and how good it feels.

"It is rather reminiscent for me of being a young graduate student, going off to Liberia, and for the first time then, from 1960 to 1962, living in a society that was overwhelmingly a society made up of Black folks. Here I am now in a setting, where it is a school which predominantly for Black women. There are some things that happen in a setting like this. And I think what's important is not so much how I experience it as a professor, but what happens to students.

"When these young women walk into a classroom and do not have to begin by proving that they can do math even though they are women; or that they can tackle and conquer chemistry, even though they are Black. . . . They don't even have to go through that. They just get right to it. The assumption of their teachers, and indeed their own assumptions, is that they are more than capable of an engagement of whatever there is there, intellectually.

"So I think for young, and not so young Black women, Spelman is an extraordinarily nurturing, affirming experience."

Racism/Conflicts at Spelman

"I don't use that word [racism] loosely. To me it has a very definitive meaning which is not applicable when one talks about color conflicts in Black communities. Yes, there's some of that here. I know of no place in America where it doesn't exist. It is a function of how we got here and how we came to be of different color. It is not an invention, in an interesting way, from the memory of Black folk. It is an invention of a system of slavery and one of the consequences of all of that is that there are associations made between color of skin, form of hair, and status.

"But what has shocked me is not what one might say is the presence, if you want to use the terms of Spike Lee, of the Wan-

nabees. What has surprised me is the very solid presence on this campus of the total range of colors of Black women.

"There's a myth that says that somehow Spelman is a school run by very light-skinned, very wealthy women who are constantly oppressing the dark-skinned, poor ones. That simply has no relevance on the campus. Historically, Spelman has in fact represented the range of Black America. And when one looks at the pictures, as I like to do, of women in the early days of Spelman, one sees a really strong presence of African-looking women—if by that you mean women of darker pigmentation. At the same time I am in no way suggesting that conflicts are absent; I am in no way suggesting that the phenomenon of color-coding is not present in some belief-system at Spelman, just as it is present all over our country."

"I was very privileged to have spent some small moments with James Baldwin."

Comments on Spike Lee's movie, *School Daze*

"I think that this is an important film. And I think the importance of it, is in many ways, a frightening statement. What I mean by that is, it is one of the very, very, very, very few films made by a Black filmmaker in America in 1988; and that is a serious indictment. Because it is a film, which sits almost exclusively in its own category, it is a film which is being subjected to unheard of debates and discussions. [It is, in that sense] very reminiscent, to me, of *The Color Purple*.

"So the first thing I want to say about *School Daze* is that I think we ought to spend a lot more time asking why Spike Lee is one of the few Black filmmakers in all of America. The point that flows from that is that because it is a 'rarity,' the majority of us come to the film expecting it to be all things to all people. I don't think that Spike Lee would even suggest that this is a film which indeed reveals the total complexity of Black America. It is a particular slice of a particular segment of a particular weekend as a metaphor, perhaps, of a larger reality. The film, it seems to me, in many ways is very creative. There are parts which I don't particularly like, but then, I don't particularly like these parts in any of the modern films. I have difficulty moving in and out of a kind of musical comedy and a serious, almost tragic mode. Maybe that's because I'm fifty-one and not thirty or twenty. But I do think that there are issues there that

are extremely important for us to discuss and to understand and they're issues of race, of gender, and of class."

"Were I the filmmaker, it would be a different film. Were I the filmmaker, the images of women, I am convinced, would be very different from the images of women that Spike Lee portrays. And so at the same time that I have to understand that it is his film, that it is his image, I think that we are all operating under the responsibility to push ourselves to understand the other reality; to pose the question from the perspective of, if one is man, the perspective of a woman, if one is Black, if one is not. It is in that tension of the double vision that I think we often get some of the most interesting art. Otherwise it comes out to me as a very, very profoundly male film.

"It's the film of a very outstanding thirty-year-old filmmaker, and I think everybody ought to be interested in that kind of art. I think it's going to be, for many white Americans, difficult to understand what that film says for them; and yet, on another level it seems to me, that the film does raise questions which are far beyond Black America. I think there are questions there of gender and power; and one can blink one's eyes and one can produce different scenes in one's imagination and it is not about Black students, men and women of Mission College. It is about the power of men as exercised over women, and they don't have to be Black."

On the passing of author James Baldwin, and painter, Romare Bearden

"I was very privileged to have spent some small moments with James Baldwin. Small in the sense of the duration of these moments, enormous, in the sense of the gift that man inevitably gave when you were in his presence. I think there is a huge void in the lives of all of those who want some justice sometimes, because Jimmy Baldwin is no longer among us calling for it.

"[To talk of Romare Bearden] is to talk again, of one of the cultural forces in the lives of millions of Americans—of millions of people of the Americas—of millions of people in the world. It inevitably poses a question then, who will carry it on—which I ought to take the privilege of turning around to ask you. What are you and the Black students at a place like the University of Massachusetts at Amherst doing? To ask what you are doing, tells me in some way what your relationship [is] to a Jimmy Baldwin."

Rio Gabriel is a UMass junior Communications and Film major from Toronto, Canada



Stained Glass Window

AKILI RON ANDERSON: AFRICOBRA

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

"Today we are still challenged to be dissatisfied. Let us be dissatisfied until every man can have food and material necessities for his body, culture and education for his mind, freedom and human dignity for his spirit. Let us be dissatisfied until the empty stomachs of Mississippi are filled and the idle industries of Appalachia are revitalized. . . . Let us be dissatisfied until our brothers of the Third World, Asia, Africa and Latin America — will no longer be the victims of imperialist exploitation, but will be lifted from the long night of poverty, illiteracy and disease. Let us be dissatisfied until this pending cosmic elegy will be transformed into a creative psalm of peace and 'justice will roll down like waters from a mighty stream.' "

"As much as I deplore violence, there is one evil that is worse than violence, and that's cowardice. . . . A man who won't die for something is not fit to live.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

"If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But by all means keep moving."

"Our destiny is bound up with the destiny of America — we built it for two centuries without wages; we made cotton king; we built our homes and homes for our masters and suffered injustice and humiliation. But out of a bottomless vitality we continued to live and grow. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not extinguish our existence, the opposition we face now will surely fail. We feel that we are the conscience of America — we are its troubled soul."



Photo by Adger Cowans

SPIKE LEE (cont'd from 51)

as being sexist for portraying that, but I don't think I'm sexist."

The biggest issue concerns the conflict which arises between "light-skinned" (Wannabees) and "dark-skinned" (Jigaboos) Blacks. In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois stated that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line." What *School Daze* attempts is to show how this problem has succeeded not only in dividing society in general, but also in causing division within the Black community; and how we have to wake up to the "cosmetic and synthetic differences that have been put on us and that have kept us apart to this very day"[†]

The Wannabees, as Lee terms them, wear blue contact lenses and straighten and color their hair, while the Jigaboos have "natchel" 'dos and don't wear make up. There is a song and dance number that takes place in "Madame Re-Re's" beauty salon which epitomizes the dispute through the lyrics of Bill Lee's "Straight and Nappy." "Don't you wish you had hair like this, then the boys would give you a kiss You got so much grease up there, tell me, dear, is that a weave you wear My hair is straight you see But your soul's as crooked as can be."[‡]

It is common knowledge that African-Americans come in all shades—even white. "You know, this whole class/color thing, that came from slavery, when the

mulatto class developed from the massa sneaking into the slave quarters and them getting the preferential jobs being the house niggers [is] still evident today."[†] Historically speaking, favor was/is accorded by larger society to those who were/are lighter in complexion, or put another way, as close to the "wonderful white" as possible. The issue of assimilation in America is one of political, economic, psychological, and cultural survival, so it shouldn't be a surprise that this criteria for judgment should infiltrate the Black community.

Critics of *School Daze* lament over the fact that they feel that Spike "overdoes it" with the message, and further claim that the problem does not exist within the African-American community. As far as overdoing it is concerned, Spike's rapping on the issue is just as incessant as our years "asleep" are long. The denial of the color and assimilation issue is proof positive that some of us are *still* sleeping. Seeing the movie with a predominantly Black audience throws denial right out of the window as you hear the disapproving reaction to the "dark-skinned" sisters in the film. "People try to tell me that there is no dark-skinned/light-skinned thing and then you go to audiences and you see the way that the men act towards the Gamma Rays and then the way they act toward the Jigs." Comments such as

"Don't kiss that thang!"—referring to "Rachel"—are actually made.

Conflict also arose among the cast members. Albeit instigated by Spike's separation of the Jigaboos and Wannabees to different hotels—the Bees with the guys in a fancier hotel than where the Jigs and Spike and the crew stayed—the intensity of the friction could not have occurred without preconceived attitudes on the part of some of the actors. In *Uplift the Race*, there are accounts by several actors about the atmosphere of tension in the production. There is one account by Tisha Campbell ("Jane Toussaint") in which she describes her feelings about playing the lead Wannabee character. "There was one time when I honestly felt that I was this character. We were filming the Greek Show and I knew that I was she, and I began to hate the Gamma Rays, the Jigs, and hate myself. It was one of the Gammas who actually came up with the rhyme about the Jigaboos that the Gamma Rays shouted in the Greek Show To me, both rhymes felt uncalled for. I looked over towards them (the Jigs) when we had finished chanting. There must have been this expression on my face of anger mixed with hurt. Tracey Robinson (ensemble Jig) called my name, not 'Jane' but Tisha. I looked, blinked my eyes, and looked again, and she said, 'We know you're a Jig, we know you're a Jig.'

I guess she was trying to get me out of it because I was sinking."

Lack of unity is exactly what Spike is speaking about and he is speaking directly to the Black audience. "This film was made for black people. I'm not going to lie and say, well, I hope I get the widest—everybody wants as many people as they can to see their works. But my number-one concern is that black people see this film. And knowing how white people always try to be hip, I know they're going to come see it too. We had a large young white following with *She's Gotta Have It*, and I expect more of the same kind of thing with *School Daze*. But I make films primarily for Black people"

Whether or not a consensus is reached on the work of Spike Lee is not really an issue. The fact that he has engaged us in a dialogue about several issues pertaining to the African-American experience which can longer be hidden behind kitchen doors, is testament to his genuine concern for the furthering and survival of Black culture in white American society.

"I'm not saying that I have the answer to all the wrongs in the world or want the burden on me of being a spokesman for black people. I just try to present the stuff in my films"

"What I feel is a lack of unity among black people today. A lot has to do with racism. When you're oppressed you start to hate yourself. It's like when they

brought slaves over from Africa. The slave traders knew for sure not to have a whole ship of slaves who spoke the same language. If that happened, there would have been a mutiny, an uprising. We need to let people know this lack of unity is something that needs to be fixed."*

We don't all have to say the same thing, but we should strive to at least speak the same language. In the words of the immortal Bob Marley, "None but ourselves, can free our minds."

Martha Grier-Deen is a junior Afro-American Studies major originally from New York City.

SASTRY (cont'd from 61)

During Gandhi's movement, did you ever participate in the marches, rallies and other forms of protest?

Yes, I did. We were all high school children at that time, but we still used to go and march and wave the flags and wave the slogans like "Quit India," "Immediate Independence for India," and "Self Rule." I was sad that Gandhi was assassinated—particularly the way it happened. When I was in ninth grade, I believe, that was a very sad and unique experience. But I did participate as a student in college, as well as in political rallies that were aimed at bringing redress of injustice to people in different ways. As I said, I was kind of inspired by Gandhi and I did have a single opportunity to see a glimpse of him, and that in itself was a memorable experience.

Are you an American citizen?

No, I am not. I am what is called a permanent resident. I suppose I should have taken American citizenship, nevertheless, I never took that step. Philosophically, I have some problems with it. At the time when I could have taken it, we had these problems with the Vietnam War and the Nixon-Watergate business, and that kind of turned me off in some sense. I worked for the community, I identify myself with the community and the interest of the community where I live. On the other hand, I tell myself I am Indian, my ideas are Indian, and in fact, for that matter, I am proud of being Indian [and] I am proud of being here in a multicultural society.

What do you think is the biggest problem currently facing India?

The problems of India exist primarily because the injustices perceived are real amongst various components of India. The South versus the North, the Telligus

versus the Tamils, the Sikhs versus the Punjabis, the Moslems versus the Hindus. If we can abate these problems, I think India can progress a lot. Some people think that India cannot feed its millions, and that is not really true. The Green Revolution has shown that India can feed its people. I think the real problem is the conflict of interest, and the fights that go on from time to time.

Presently, there is a lot of violence and hatred toward Sikhs, Moslems and non-Hindus in India. Where do you feel that some of this is stemming from?

Well, human beings are human beings, and they often get emotionally upset because of certain wrongdoings—intentionally or unintentionally done—by the majority community. These injustices, when they are not redressed in an equitable manner, build up—you may have tranquility and order, but it is like a powder keg. Something very trivial can ignite it. Once again, I feel that it is parochialism, regionalism and so on. I think these are some of the problems of India, as well as elsewhere in the world; I mean, we are imperfect human beings.

What are your feelings toward the present Gandhi regime?

Well, I wish I could tell you, but I do not live there. I think the problems of Rajiv Gandhi is that his hands are full of problems. If he can get the Hindu-Sikh problem reasonably settled . . . I have great respect for the Sikhs. Sikhs are as great patriots as anybody else in India. If he can resolve that problem, perhaps the country can move in more creative directions. Apparently, he is a very capable person, but individual capability is not the only thing. There are millions of people in India, and people can be very easily excited,

often by very trivial things.

What is your evaluation of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement?

I think that [Blacks] really did the thing that they should have done. Injustice was prevalent and they stood up to that. They brought attention to the national conscience and that really had a major impact on the progress of civil rights in this country. I think it is a magnificent contribution of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his associates.

Have you had any experiences with oppression in the U.S. and what has been the progress in race relations in your view?

I [have] not personally experienced any discrimination. On the other hand, I am aware of people who did experience such problems. I think the U.S. has come a long way in one sense and still not quite [far enough] in another. I also think that the commitment from people toward this cause has been declining compared to the 60s and 70s.

What is your suggestion for those of us who are facing oppression?

First of all, be yourself. You have to have the strength of your convictions, and if you don't then you won't be able to fight for your beliefs. This must not be self-centered, but in a way it is a sense of idealism wherein you believe that the rights of the other person such as free speech, free assembly and so on, are as important as your rights. You should be able to fight for the rights of others so that your rights are maintained—so it is a sensitivity and commitment to seeing that the other person is of the same human kind as you are. When this realization is permeated, I think we will have a wonderfully multicultural society.

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school, such as I was doing; people who were working on degrees in art, as well as people who were professional artists . . . and I gradually understood the concepts that each one of the other nine people had and I guess they picked up mine and it was a really great experience.

Nelson's artistic career coincided with the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s. This was a time when Black artists strove to define their own aesthetic as something very separate from the European aesthetic which was always regarded as the "norm" for critical analysis, but which did not jibe with the experience of African-Americans in its entirety. The late, great writer and literary critic, Larry Neal, summed it up best when he said, ". . . [When] we speak of an aesthetic, we mean more than the process of making art, of telling stories, of writing poems, of performing plays. We also mean the destruction of the white thing . . . the destruction of the white way of looking at the world. When artists . . . assert that Black art must speak to the lives and the psyche of Black People, they are not speaking of "protest" art . . . they are speaking of an art that addresses itself directly to Black people; an art that speaks to us in terms of our feelings and ideas about the world; an art that validates the positive aspects of our lifestyle . . . that makes us understand our condition and each other in a more profound manner; that unites us, exposing us to our painful weaknesses and strengths; and finally, an art that posits for us the Vision of a Liberated Future." ["Black Art and Black Literature," *Ebony Magazine*, Aug. 1969, 54-56.] The influence this emerging ideology had on Nelson was to become quite apparent in his work.

After he left Cleveland, Nelson started graduate study in art at Kent State University. *I seriously enrolled in school after [Martin Luther] King was assassinated in '68—April 4th—and I graduated in '69. All through that process at Kent State, I was trying to prove to the professors and the people in the Art Department that there was such a thing as Black art. I remember researching the Mexican muralists; Cuban painters like Ralfredo Lamm; South American painters like Matta, and trying to find out alternative views about what art was about. That was the same time that I was researching the **Wall of Respect** in Chicago and running into great resistance because they felt . . . that there was no prejudice in art; that . . . prejudice existed but it certainly could not exist within the world of art. I remember very distinctly having very heated arguments with my professors at that time as to what art was about, because their major tenet was that art was for the sake of art and I was developing a position that said that art was for the sake of people—we were diametrically opposed. Fortunately I could paint well enough so that I was able to graduate, and graduate with honors. Even the school at that point saw fit to purchase several pieces of my art and that was good . . . [While] I was working on my graduate project, someone had stolen about half of the paintings from my studio that I was supposed to exhibit. This was about one month before the exhibit and I had let the faculty members, with whom I was at war, know that [even though] that had happened, I was still going to have the exhibit. And one night three or four of them came down to the graduate studio where I was painting and Larry [Neal] was painting on a wall in my studio; he was making vè vè and ju ju signs. His book, **Black Boogaloo** [1968], had just been published and he was reading poems. When they came in he just disappeared for a moment, or was very quiet. They started asking me all these questions about what I thought about African art, American art and Black art, and for three hours Larry started talking to them about Aristotle, Plato; about call and response from the Greeks [of the Greek choirs], from the Africans . . . He displayed such a wide range of aesthetic, historical, literary information that night—to the astonishment of these professors—that I think by extension they thought that I knew*

everything he did. I wish I had it on tape, it was the history of man and their position in it. It was awesome. I did some great painting that night. It was awe-inspiring. And I generally think that everybody's got just about the same thing going for them. But not that night.

After graduating from Kent State, Nelson went immediately to Chicago and hooked up with Africobra—an African-American artistic collective. He had already met one of the artists in the group, Jeff Donaldson, and was able to make it to the group's second or third meeting. As compared to the Creative Workshop in Cleveland, Africobra very definitely had a political as well as artistic orientation. *Africobra was the same kind of communal spirit [as the Creative Workshop] with a political ideology, an ideology that dealt with an alternative system—that system being an Afrocentric system as opposed to a Eurocentric system.*

One of the main facets of Africobra, which still exists today, is their use of the Black 'folk' community as inspiration in creating work which is reflective of the Black aesthetic. Also prevalent in the work of Africobra members is the way in which they avoid empty spaces "exemplified in their compact and complex compositions with competing design patterns,"—again, relative to African aestheticism. [*Beyond 1984: Contemporary Perspectives on American Art*, eds. Paul W. Richelson and S.W. Payne, Trisolini Gallery of Ohio University, 1985]

One of Nelson's main areas of creative expression has been in murals. Aside from the aforementioned *Wall of Respect* in Chicago, Nelson has worked on over 40 murals. His first was painted in Boston in 1973 in conjunction with United Construction Workers and Dana Chandler, entitled *Work to Unify African People*.

When he first began teaching at UMass in the early to mid-seventies, he organized groups of students to paint several murals in the Springfield area, some of which are still in existence. They would go to Springfield each day of the week in the summer to paint. There were many more Black art majors at the time and they would get a stipend and credit for their participation in the program. [This was when funds were still being generated by "liberal" philanthropic organizations in order to further Black culture.]

Nelson thinks that his best work is the mural he painted on the occasion of Tuskegee's 100th anniversary, entitled *Centennial Vision*. *The piece that I've put the most blood, sweat, pain and perspiration into—and a little bit of genius, I think—is down at Tuskegee. It's called **Centennial Vision** and it speaks of the first one hundred years of Booker T. Washington's concepts about Tuskegee Institute, which is now Tuskegee University . . . I think I got everything in on than one that I wanted to get in. If I had to stand behind one piece that would be it.*

Included in the mural are such historical figures as: Booker T. Washington, Cinque, Sojourner Truth, Mary McCloud Bethune, W.E.B. Du Bois, Malcolm X, George Washington Carver, Dr. Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Harriet Tubman, Paul Robeson and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Toni Cade Bambara had a few words to say about the mural: "The Tuskegee Centennial Mural to celebrate the Institute and it's mission, presented artist Nelson with an especial challenge—how to collaborate with one hundred years of history. 'I AM BECAUSE WE ARE' draws us into the 12x26 mural. A statement that hallmarks Black practice in art, literature, music and dance—private expression derived from group mores rendered for public ends, the blend of the collective history and the interpreting eye, the melding of the worker's craft and the processes of the community that supports, sustains, and offers up its lore for transmutation by the artist." [*Vision—Tuskegee Institute: Nelson Stevens*, 1980, p.4]

"Afri-Cobra II," held in the fall of 1971, also at The Studio Museum.

After this exhibit, many of the artists moved from Chicago and Afri-Cobra was forced to change. Today, the bi-weekly meetings are no longer held. The group, however, remains in contact tri-annually, though communicating across the country makes for a much slower development pace.

Afri-Cobra, though having undergone many changes since its origination, remains today one of the most significant, enduring, and successful manifestations of the Black Arts Movement of the sixties.

THE ARTISTS

Robert Farris Thompson, in his book, *Flash of the Spirit*, conducts an "investigation of the visual and philosophic streams of creativity and imagination that link Black persons of the western hemisphere . . . and of Europe and Asia to Mother Africa."

Thompson's claim is that many aspects of various sub-Saharan cultures, including the Yoruba of Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, the Bakongo of Zaire, Cabinda, and Angola, the Fon and Ewe of the Republic of Benin and Togo, the Mande of Mali, and the Ejagham of Southeastern Nigeria and Southwestern Cameroon, have carried over into art and philosophy of the people of the New World.

Afri-Cobra artists agree. When asked if they felt personally affected by these cultures, the artists responded in various ways.

Frank Smith, painter, answered, "Yes, I respond to their pattern and energy."

"Black experiences are everyone's experiences," explained Adger Cowans. "The entire world was originally Black. Everyone is African." For this reason, he claims, the streams of creativity of the Yoruba, Mande, Ejagham, and other cultures are in our heritage. Afri-Cobra artists feel innately influenced by Mother Africa, and the public responds.

"In my view the history to the west begins in Africa, specifically in Egypt," said Smith. "The Greeks went to Africa to be educated, so how can we talk about Greco-Roman being the source of anything? That is an intermediate period which looks back to Africa. Everything from traditional to abstract to symbolic art are all within a single culture. Like the beginnings of man himself, I feel that all art goes back to Africa where [civilization] began."

"However," adds Cowans, "life experience is the one. Only if you've been in direct contact [with these cultures] do you fully recognize the influence."

Cowan's statement is echoed by Wadsworth Jarrell, painter-photographer.

"Through my years of experience and observation of people, I have found that African people are the forerunners, innovators, creators . . . the awesomeness of African sculpture and the rhythmic patterns used in African weaving have been a profound influence on me . . . African people are my motivation."

When asked whether there was such an entity as Black Art, Frank Smith responded, "My usual answer to that is what is white art, and that brings us back to what is art. I would say that real Black art will be the visual equivalent of Black music and I think that is what those of us in Afri-Cobra have been trying to produce. It's an image of jazz. As far as defining what that image is it is going to be largely improvised. I think it will be the art of the 20th century. I think that we will find a forest of material in African art. Most modern art source material is in African art and in Jazz music. That is one of the things that I have been trying to do with my work."

"I feel that art in general celebrates culture," says Akili Ron Anderson. "Cultural dynamics bind together people of a common ethnic background, race, land mass, and aspiration. Art is that which speaks of a historical context, a sense of destiny, continuum, and a world view. It is more than a chronicle of history or a matter-of-factness. It has to do with the imagination. It has to do with what is seen and what is felt about that particular culture. It is a dynamic that becomes more than real. I won't say surreal because that has to do with a certain style, but it is bigger than life. It has to do with all those things, and it has a spiritual context. It excites people. It makes people happy to be who they are. It also reflects the need to pull ourselves up from oppression. We're as great as any other civilization. The body of work should celebrate that as a whole. This is what all art should do for all cultures. African-American art should certainly do no less than that. It has done that over the years in many different ways."

Jeff Donaldson was asked to comment on European imitation of Black art. "They also have that right. They have been so close that we share a common heritage. They are just not able to do it as well as we do. It is also true on the other side of the coin."

Afri-Cobra artists cited a range of influences as having had an impact on their philosophies and art. Many writers were mentioned. Frank Smith included writers James Phillips, Bob Stull and Charles Searles. Adger Cowans feels influenced by the biographies of Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, and others and also by the works of J.A. Rodgers. Cowans also names "jazz" music as a major influence. His col-

leagues, Smith and Donaldson, also had a word to say about Black music.

"It is like a language," says Smith, "a lifestyle, it is more than music—it is an improvised way of dealing with life. This is what we as a people have had to do: constantly adapt, adjust and deal with our environment by improvisation. It is the way we play music, it is also the way we produce art. When I approach the image, I approach it in much the same way. I have a central structure in mind perhaps, but I work totally improvisationally. I don't use preliminary drawings, no sketches. I don't have any color scheme in mind unless that is what the conditions call for. When I'm working for myself I just do it."

"Yes, I like for my work to achieve the same level of intensity associated with Black music," says Donaldson. "Not just 'jazz,' but all Black music. One of the major attractions that jazz has for the visual artist is that here is a continuum that one can trace directly back to Africa through our history in this country. We can't do that with the visual art because we were forbidden during our captivity [to create it.] We can take cues from the music to try and find a direct line to our heritage."

Other artists were also cited as influential. James Phillips and Jeff Donaldson named Romare Bearden, the great African-American artist/collagist as one. A point which is interesting to note is that nearly all of them named other Afri-Cobra members as their major influences. It is an obvious conclusion that the critique and analysis sessions held in the early years of Afri-Cobra were most beneficial to the artists.

The artists appeared to be a bit thrown by the question, "Is there another artist or art form that parallels what you are all about?"

The most common response was yes, that many artists have similarities. This is so, they responded, because "[We] do not make art . . . I am not the creator, but the instrument of the creator." [Napolean Henderson]

"God, great creator, made everything," agrees Cowans. "The artist is moved by the spirit. He is the translator. For this reason, you've got to keep your channel clean and open to receive his message."

Cowans continues, "Many artists parallel my work. There is nothing new under the sun. Everything has been done already." All art is reiteration of visual statements that have already been made. "However, it is all original for our time."

Henderson summarizes, "My work, in its essence, is spiritual—meaningful. I am the creator's instrument, endowed with his knowledge."

continued on page 86

“... what people are the taste makers?”

... There is a tendency for power structures to attempt to establish the ideology upon which is based the culture's Art and Music. Rembrandt's picture "Night-watchman" is said to help establish the standard of quality for Western culture's art. But when works like the "Night-watchman" are pointed to, members of the power structure are merely pointing to themselves. This is what is happening with the music of today. Those people who support the symphony orchestras like to hear Beethoven, Mozart, etc., so that is what the orchestra plays. They are reinforcing their own self-image. They are establishing the ideas of what is quality, what is unique, and what are the ingredients of real Art. A power structure controls what people like because those in the power structure are the taste makers.

“... Hawkins was an intellectual improvisationist.”

... In none of the education I got in the institutions and schools of music did we ever deal with Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, or Louis Armstrong. The classes in those institutions dealt with Beethoven, Bach, the various periods of classical music, etc. If that is the education young people are getting, that is what they know about.

For instance, while I was living in New Jersey, a school teacher who lived down the street found out that I was a musician. She said she would like an African musician to address her class. After I helped her with that, I asked her if she knew who Charlie Parker was. She did not know. You see, young people are not being educated to the music from their roots. They have no intellectual connection to the music. Young people are not responsible for anything that they don't know about.

In an average school a music student

may take a class in symphonic tone. In the class you examine and go through a symphony. Since the symphony is written, it enters your eyes as well as ears. Then the class's attention may be directed to where in the work a dominant theme might be played, then where the subordinate themes are played. In the class, the student's attention is directed to the details of each transition. In fact, the structure of the transition is examined and the development of each section is shown. When students come out of that class, they are thinking that the composer was a great man, which he was for what he did.

However, this is not done for the music of Coleman Hawkins. Hawkins superimposed changes on music. He superimposed changes which can be examined very closely just as if we were to examine a work by Beethoven. But this is not done.

If classes would examine Hawkins they would come to an intellectual understanding of Coleman Hawkins as the musician he really was. In "Jazz," Hawkins was one of the first intellectual improvisationists.

Music students don't know that and this is an example of how teaching has a lot to do with what people think or don't think.

“... nurture to blossom and develop.”

... I remember years ago when I was standing outside of Birdland and John Coltrane was playing inside. There was another young sax player with me but he would not go in and listen to Coltrane. He was holding his ground. You understand that it goes back to knowing yourself. If something is going to destroy you, you stay away from it. I listened to Coltrane and Griffin. Yea, I listened to anyone because when I listen, I listen to hear the SPIRIT, not the element of the music. I listen to the spirit of the person, not the intervolic elements.

I do not listen to capture technical elements for myself. I listen to the spirit, the intensity of the music. The spirit and the intensity are the 'persona', and, if I hear another person coming through the music to me because of the persona's influence, then it makes me stride to express my own. I think God has given us all that we need. There is no need to imitate anybody. Each person is a unique part of God's creation. All we need to do is nurture our spirit for it to blossom and to develop.

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Photo by Nelson Stevens

L A T E E F

SYMPHONY No.1

("TAHIRA")

by

YUSEF A. LATEEF

MOVEMENT NO. 2

INSTRUMENTATION

2 FLUTES
2 OBCES
2 CLARINETS in B $\flat$
2 BASSOONS
4 HORNS in F
2 TRUMPETS in B $\flat$
3 TROMBONES
TUBA
CYMBALS
SNARE DRUM
BASS DRUM
TRIANGLE
CHIMES
TIMPANI
VIOLINS 1,2
VIOLA
VICIENCELLO
CONTRA BASS

... When I listen to my symphony, a great deal of my life comes back. Only it comes back in many different ways. I believe that all of the ways it comes back are positive because life is a positive force. But not all of our experiences in life are positive experiences; we learn from our experiences. That part of living is hardship. And after hardship comes ease. That is what music is all about: tension and release. When you hear something that sounds dissonant that could be tension. Life itself becomes tense at times. However, there would be no challenge in life without some tension.

... Even in my symphony you will hear a Blues feeling. There are different types of Blues. There is sadness and festive like Charlie Parker. There is determination like "Now is the time!"; explanatory like metropolitan Blues.

"Sometimes I am moved to tears."

... After I was introduced to some of the classical composers, I thought that I would like to write symphonies as well. That is one reason I furthered my educa-

tion in academe. When I finished, I was capable of writing a symphony named "Tahara." It was a thrill to create a work for 80 musicians. It is a thrill to hear the sound of your own expression coming back at you.

Of course the greatest experience is when the ideas come to you, and you write them down. When I hear a symphony orchestra playing my composition, I am listening to the creative thoughts; I am reliving their creation. In my thoughts I hear the music I heard when I wrote it down.

When I compose, I feel the musical idea that must be put on paper. I also have to reject those ideas that don't feel right. At other times you, as the composer, hear many things going at once. "Tahira" was conceived for my "Jazz" quartet. The symphony's second movement was written for my wife. Sitting and listening to this symphonic work sometimes touches me. It touches me to be able to transfer a deep feeling to paper. It touches me to be able to relive ideas that I had at the moment when they were captured on paper. At those times I am reliving my life through hearing my music, and it is then that sometimes I am moved to tears.

Score in Concert

II.

YUSEF

Very slowly (with love)
(J=54)

Fls. 1. 2. Bsn. 1.

Very Slowly (with love)
(J=54)

1, 2 Hns 3, 4.

Very Slowly (with love)
(J=54)

Vln. Vla. Vcl. Bass.

Fls. 1. 2.

1, 2 Hns Vln. Vla. Vcl. Bass.

LATEEF

Musical score for measures 15-20. The score is for a symphony, featuring woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes parts for Flute (Fls.), Oboe 1 (Ob. 1), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Horns 1 & 2 (Hns 1, 2), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Bass. The dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets.

Musical score for measures 21-27. The score continues from the previous system, featuring woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes parts for Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Oboe 1 (Ob. 1), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Bassoon (Bsns.), Horns 1 & 2 (Hn 1, 2), Trumpet 1 (Tpt. 1), Trombone 1 & 2 (Tbns 1, 2), Trombone 3 (Tuba), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Bass. The dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets.

YUSEF

Fls. *a2* *ff* *cresc.*

Obs. *a2* *ff* *cresc.*

Cts. *ff* *cresc.*

Bsns. *ff* *cresc.*

Hms. *a2* *ff* *cresc.*

3,4 *ff* *cresc.*

1. *ff* *cresc.*

2 *ff* *cresc.*

1,2 *a2* *ff* *cresc.*

3 *ff* *cresc.*

Tuba *ff* *cresc.*

Cym. *f*

Vln. *8va* *ff* *cresc.*

Vla. *ff* *cresc.*

Vcl. *ff* *cresc.*

Bass *ff* *cresc.*

28. 29. 30. 31. 32.

LATEEF

1. Fl. 1 *p* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *cresc.*

2. Fl. 2 *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *cresc.*

Vin. *pp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *cresc.*

Via. *pp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *cresc.*

Vcl. *pp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *cresc.*

Bs. *pp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *cresc.*

33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38.

1. Fl. 1 *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

2. Fl. 2 *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

Oboe *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

1. Clar. *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

2. Clar. *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

Basn. 1 *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

1, 2 Horns *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

3, 4 Horns *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

1, 2 Trombs *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

3 Tubas *p* *dim.* *dim.* *p* *pp*

39. 40. 41. 42. 43.

YUSEF

DISCOGRAPHY

— Prestige Records

Albums:

1. Eastern Sounds
2. Into Something
3. The Sounds of Yusef Lateef
4. Other Sounds
5. Cry-Tender

— Savoy Records

Albums:

1. Jazz and the Sounds of Nature
2. Prayer to the East
3. Jazz Moods
4. Jazz for Thinkers
5. The Fabric of Jazz
6. Stable Mates
7. The Dreamer

— Riverside Records & Impulse Records

Albums:

1. Three Faces of Yusef Lateef
2. The Centaur and the Phoenix
3. 1984
4. Psychicmopus
5. A Flat, G Flat and C
6. The Golden Flute

— Verve Records

Album:

1. Before Dawn

— Argo Records

Album:

1. Lateef at Cranbrook

— Atlantic Records

Albums:

1. The Complete Yusef Lateef
2. The Blue Yusef Lateef
3. Yusef Lateef's Detroit
4. The Diverse Yusef Lateef
5. The Gentle Giant
6. Hush in' Thunder
7. Part of the Search
8. Ten Years Hence
9. Suite Sixteen
10. The Doctor is In and Out

— C.T.I. Records

Albums:

1. Autophysiopsyche
2. In a Temple Garden

— C.N.C.S. Records

Album:

1. Hikima

— Landmark Records

Album:

1. Yusef Lateef in Nigeria



“... the musician and his Creator.”

... Each of us as an individual has two parts. We are two things. On the one hand, we are able to experience things. In other words, we experience feelings and our reactions to things in the outside world. But we are more than just housed in this protoplasm. Just being a mass of protoplasm is not being human. We have that other part of ourselves which is our thinking. We have to nurture these two parts. How do we nurture what we call the immaterial self? Basically, the immaterial self is nurtured by love of God. It follows that if you love God, then you love God's creations.

If I have a deep feeling for God, then I can become capable of expressing these deep feelings with whatever I do. This allows me to appreciate someone else who is trying to do the same thing. What I listen to, when I listen to “Jazz,” or a vocal musician, is this: I listen to the depth of expression of the relationship between the musician and his knowledge of the Creation, and the Creator. Why did John Coltrane write something called “Love Supreme”? Playing “Jazz” music is more than an intellectual exercise.

John Coltrane used to say that one thing that was hard for him was to know when to end. I guess as long as there is life there is no ending. That is the way I interpret the idea. It was because Coltrane found it hard to end that he used to play so long. He was reaching for a depth of awareness of the spirituality of the Lord. Life itself is a phenomenon. Life is an expression of Creation.

LATEEF

I AM BECAUSE WE ARE (cont'd from 76)

Nelson's commitment to aesthetic integrity is prevalent throughout his work. He recognizes the importance of preserving African-American culture and is concerned about the current scene as regards to a younger generation of Black artists. *I think I'm very fortunate to have gone through the 60s and been involved in that period of time. I think it's a little harder now—I think it's more difficult. I don't think that there are as many artists in their 30s and 20s as there are perhaps in their 40s who have gone through that period of time. I think many of the doors that were open then—although we didn't believe that they were open and we were trying to open them as much as possible—have not stayed open. They haven't even stayed open for the group that I belong to. I look through my resumé at the amounts of talks I was giving during a particular part of time and those talks aren't requested any longer from anyone. It's not that they're not requested from me; they're not requested from anyone; [because of] the Reagan cuts . . . on the arts groups; the kinds of cuts to the National Endowment for the Humanities and Arts. [These groups have] all had a great impact on putting people in significant positions. I go to conferences and conventions and . . . I don't see another generation or two behind, coming in and picking up. I think the consequences of it are very bad. I'm not heartened by it. I think that unless our culture is recorded, promoted and written about and understood, it can wither and die—kind of like a 'Raisin in the Sun' concept. From that standpoint it doesn't hearten me at all. What does hearten me is to see, at these conferences, two and three people—not the same numbers that used to be—[who are] really bright, really intelligent, really committed to expressing their talents.*

Concerning Nelson's own artistic future he'd like his next focus to be on creating art to be displayed on billboards. *The idea that excites me now is taking billboards, which are located—according to marketing people—in strategic places, and putting pure art on [them]. This can be done. It's not a brand new idea, but it's an idea I'm going to start putting my energies behind. And I know many artists who would like the opportunity to deal with the billboard concept. That's not the stumbling block; the stumbling block at this point is getting advertisers who own the billboards to deal with this concept . . . and give up the space.*

Nelson's involvement as faculty advisor to *DRUM Magazine* has also been one of his many professional accomplishments. He has been advisor since 1977 and if you ask any student who has worked on the magazine as to whether or not it could fly without Nelson's input you would get a resounding NO! The rapport and respect that he has for the students with which he works is unique to a professor-student relationship. His ability to step out of the picture far enough to let us learn by doing is a quality which has earned him respect in return. One student, Pancho Morris, who has had Nelson as a professor and who has been with *DRUM* for a couple of years, comments, "Nelson, through his artistic sensibilities, has given me an appreciation for the arts—especially Black art—that I never had before. The patience and care that he illustrates both within and outside of the classroom makes him the type of professor that students treasure and respect."

Nelson Stevens' career has spanned over two decades and throughout he has maintained an integrity and commitment to the preservation of the Black aesthetic which encompasses all social and cultural and political aspects of our experience in this strange land. I think that his good friend Larry Neal expressed it best when he wrote about Nelson's quintessential *Centennial Vision*.

"Here in this self-contained visual universe all of the contrary voices coalesce into a comprehensive artistic vision. As rendered here all of the images strongly exude a sense of vitality



BIRD FLIGHT

Nelson Stevens

ty and purpose. They all seem blessed as their faces appear to be illumined by light from some mysterious source. For the movement from darkness (ignorance) to light (intelligence) is a reoccurring pattern in Afro-American historical narratives. The mural is 'narrative' in that it is impossible to encounter it without 'reading' something into it. Hence for me, the mural is an epic saga on Afro-American leadership.

"So, and when the stories of the mural are recounted; and when the various mythologies have been stated and counter-stated, it will be obvious to all that though the mural is inspired by the 'idea Tuskegee,' it finally reaches beyond that specific will of a great people who, like the Biblical Joseph, managed to prevail in an alien land."

And when stories about Nelson Stevens, artist, are retold, they will be about more than just one man's particular vision. They will be about the collective survival of African-American culture.

Martha Grier-Deen is a junior Afro-American Studies major originally from New York City.

Barbara Jones Hugo explained the functional value of the art of Afri-Cobra. "Afri-Cobra will not only state our problems and solutions," she said, "but also our emotions, our joys, our love, our attitude, our character . . . Art can be a liberating force . . . Afri-Cobra's visual imagery should bring us together and uplift us as a people."

Adds Adger Cowans, "I like to think that my art raises the spiritual level of [the viewer's] visual consciousness through the eyes." Both he and Smith agree that the gratification is found when the viewer appreciates the beauty of their work, and consequently "feels better."

Hugo voiced the overall consensus of the group. "In all of my work I am concerned with messages to my people because they must and will survive to create a new world."

Another question posed to the artists was an inquiry into what they feel Afri-Cobra has given them, and vice versa.

In reference to meeting the artists of Afri-Cobra, Cowans said, "I felt we were in concert. We were kindred spirits. Afri-Cobra has been beneficial to me, and I have been beneficial to it. It has been reciprocal."

Frank Smith feels that his greatest contribution to Afri-Cobra has been his attempts at providing stability. "I have gained a lot of confidence from the group, a lot of reinforcement."

"Personally," said James Phillips, "my use of color and my . . . style is my unique contribution to the group."

Added Jarrell, "The impact of Afri-Cobra with me has been very [powerful] in terms of growth towards Black aesthetics. Each member has had an influence on one another, and it has given me the energy to keep creating."

Akili Ron Anderson sums it up. "Afri-Cobra has become a working philosophy. It goes beyond supporting. It has become an example for other people to follow. It

is self-perpetuating at this point. Afri-Cobra, over its 20-year history, has become an institution without walls, because it does work. I hope that other people will look at Afri-Cobra not necessarily as something to emulate, but it will become a cell that [will divide as] other people take a small group and do the same thing with a group artists of their own. It is not a matter of having a great big organization. It is having that group of people of similar interests, then building up from there. That is what I am hopeful for—that we could be a part of something much bigger."

Kara M. Banks is a UMass student and Desmond T. Dorsett is a junior COINS major from New York City.

SASTRY (cont'd from 75)

What is your position on the recent racial attack on campus, and how did you think the administrators dealt with the issue?

First of all, these incidences are perhaps indicators of the deeper problem of a lack of appropriate education. What many of these students need [is] training starting from grade one. Education should be in such a way that it will open and broaden the minds of people. Hopefully this will allow them to grow in a multicultural society. Certainly, at the University one should make an attempt to broaden the general education of students. This education should be extended to the faculty, staff, police officers, administrators and everybody in the community.

Speaking of the administration itself, they are as human as anybody else, and they don't have the magic solutions to the problems. Oftentimes, they are put on the spot and they are expected to react quick-

ly, and they don't know how to act, and in fact in many of these instances that have happened, the Administration was inept in handling these problems — and oftentimes they acted with hindsight rather than foresight.

What do you suggest that we, as a student body, should aim to do to correct these situations?

As a student body I guess we all have to decide that each individual should make a commitment to one's self, to a code of personal behavior which does not give any room for sexism, or racism or any prejudice against religious beliefs. Once an individual makes a commitment then when something [happens], that individual should go and say to the offenders "Look, you are not right." Students as a collective body? I don't know. I think some of these commitments must be made at the individual

level. For example, If two people are sitting somewhere and they make a racial slur or offense against someone, and if I proceed to just get up and walk away, I have failed in my responsibility. I should ask them, "Look, my friend, why are you saying that?," and question their injustice, to let them know that there are people who won't tolerate this kind of behavior. . . . I think we have to learn to re-dedicate ourselves to the fight against prejudice. This fight against prejudice and ignorance and lack of understanding is not going to be a quick one to be won. It is going to take a considerable amount of time. But we can mitigate the problems, and slowly improve ourselves, provided that everybody makes this commitment today and tomorrow and every day.

Professor Sastry was interviewed by Victor Alexander who is a junior Biochemistry major.

Dark Beauty

by Victor Alexander

The jungle night was misty and filled with the fragrance of jasmine.
A voice searched for me in the surrounding darkness.
I walked toward the edge of the moonlit forest, and I peered outward.
There I saw her, bathing in the mists of dusk which then transformed
into jewels of dew onto her shiny ebony skin.
Each drop shone as a diamond sparkling in brilliance as if from the
crown of Solomon.
She felt my presence, and turned; she captivated me with her gaze.
Her eyes were radiant; they were brighter than the early morning trek of
Venus through the heavens.
She beckoned me, and then she kissed me.
Her lips were sweet as honey, and her embrace sent burning flames of
passion which shook and shattered the foundations of my being, and
the innermost parts of my mind.
As I touched her hair, I felt the strength of the Nile, full flowing, life
giving and the daughter of a Great Civilization.
She held and caressed me, and doused me with her sweet essence.
And there she was: MY DARK BEAUTY

CANE

by Lori Robinson

The sun set behind the barn, leaving the sky ablaze with orange and blue hues. It was an interesting sky because the clouds that appeared closest to the sun were deep orange, a little farther up they were lighter, rosy, then they were light blue. The underside of the uppermost clouds reflected the orange of the sun. The sky looked bumpy, like crushed ice in a multi-colored glass. An older man walked into the barn, propped open the door, hung his tools and descended into the cavernous darkness. He stood black against the fiery sky.

Cane Pittman stood on his porch watching his animal brother. "Where's yo' woman lil' frien'? Is you as lon'ly as me?" He became somber as the sky darkened and he heard the creak of the barn door. The tiny animal's eyes took on the glow of the night and it scampered down the other side of the building. Cane watched his father emerge from the barn. His perspiration-laden plaid shirt clung to his broad body. He had been working harder since his wife's death. "I wunda ifn' he lon'ly as me," the younger asked himself. The two men were almost identical. History had repeated itself. The older man was a prediction of the younger's future, almost six feet tall, thick-middled, broad-shouldered, square-jawed and white-haired. His hair was his most notable feature, even though his nose was distinctly Blackfoot. The snow-white wool which covered his head, contrasted with his ebony face. He looked up and met the questioning gaze of his son, "You think I'll eva git married, Papa?"

"In due time son, when de right woman come 'long."

"How I know ifn' she de right one?"

"You know son, you know."

The porch was swallowed by the young man's presence, he stared into the darkness thoughtlessly. Everyone in the town thought him to be strange, although they did not know why. In fact, many feared him. As a child, he played in the woods by himself at night, which may have aroused the fears of some. The majority of the population was older, the children or grandchildren of slaves, and they had very strong superstitious backgrounds.

He did not cry when he was born, as a matter of fact, he didn't even cry at his baptism. "That boy's gonna be a preacha," the minister of the church predicted heartily, as his stomach rolled with laughter. Cane never became one. Nevertheless, as a small child he was very much in tune with older people. As a baby he slept when everyone else slept and woke up with everyone else. He never took naps. His infancy was dedicated to observation, his chocolate brown eyes followed everything.

"She shore is pretty, fact she beautiful. Got a nice shape too, yeah real nice," he said, as his eyes followed the very comely figure of a young lady approaching him from the outskirts of town. Her hair was pulled into a bun, her nose, straight, "Indian" he thought. Her skin was the color of fine brandy, her eyes almond-shaped and -sized, he could not distinguish their color from the distance but he knew they were light brown because he saw her every Tuesday at the supply store. He knew who she was but never ventured to speak to her. "Hi you doin' t'nite, brown sugar," he whispered with a Cheshire cat grin.

"She cert'nly can walk, though," he mused, "jes look at dem hips, I kin hear dat music. Damn, she got some legs. Humph, sho'nuf baby, Lord, I hopes I kin jes hol' on an' be still a minute. Gots to gatha ma'self up, so's I kin talk to dis lov'ly brown thang," he thought with a smile.

"Good evenin' ma'am."

"Evenin' suh," she replied in a throaty voice, her head bowed.

"An'how you doin' on dis fine evenin'?"

"I'm jes fine, thankye."

"Scuse me fo' sayin' so ma'am, but you is fine arready. What I wants ta know is how you is doin'?"

"Well den, I guess I'm doin' good."

"Humph. 'Scuse me. Ahem." He cleared his throat, licked his lips and dried his now perspiring palms. "What's yo' name?"

"Fern," she said, her eyelids lowered, her mouth closing to a grin, and her head slightly leaning to one side.

"Fern, I'm Cane an' I like yo' smile." He smiled sweetly.

"I knows who you is Mistuh Cane an' you knowed who I is, don' nuthin' go on in dis town out'n ev'ybody knowin' 'bout it."

"Yeah, I knows who you is, but seem sorta rude me jes rollin' up on ya, t'out no kinda innaduction."

"Well, I really gotta be goin'. I glad we talked . . ."

"Well, does ya mind ifn i 'company you home? Afta all, it is mighty dark an' I jes couldn't sleep wunderin' ifn' you wuz safe."

"I don' think dat sich a good idea. My papa don' lak his girls walkin' home wid no man dat ain't p'sented hisself. He ol' fashun, dis whole town be talkin' 'bout us fo' mornin' anyhow. 'Sides, I be safe walkin' by myself, I bin doin' it fo' awhile now. Ain't much futha t'go."

"I know but, let me walk wid ya haf way," he said as he moved from his post on the porch to come to the road to join her. "He wood'n know ifn I only goes part way, an' dats not d'ceivin' him 'cause I jes happen to be goin' dat way my ownself. 'Sides, I walk

wid ya part way an' den I'll waks behin' ya de rest of de way and ya gets home an' I keeps on goin' an' I be able to sleep 'cause ya home. Tell you de truf, I wants to know 'xactly whures you lives, so I kin be shur when I comes to tak ya fo' ice cream."

"Don' ya think ya should waits an' ax my papa first?"

"Course, 'course I wait. 'Til tommorra when I comes by."

"Okay, Mistuh Cane."

"Jes call me Cane," he said smiling, as he thought to himself, "Shure feels good walkin' an' talkin' to dis girl. One thin fo' so, she ain't lak dem others dat let ev'ythin' pass. Dis one don't take no stuff, dat's what ev'yone tole me, when I axed how come she ain't got no man. She pretty 'nuff to have de whole town afta her, negro an' white. She right spry to be so small."

By simply watching her walk, he could feel the power of this woman over him. "Her skin look lak de way I feels when I drinks brandy. It burn but it warm me all over, make me tingly-lak," he shuddered. She had enchanted him. "She must know," he thought. They walked towards her home in silence.

The air buzzed with the sounds of mosquitoes, the chirping of crickets and occasional human noises. The moon, round and majestic, illuminated the sky. It was perfectly round, and pale, it looked as though a hole had been punched into the black blanket that covered the sky. Only the light of the moon and that which spilled from the windows and doors of the houses lit the dirt streets. Because the weather was so warm, people sat on their porches, talked, played guitars, sang, or just rocked idly to pass the time. They watched Cane and Fern pass. Although they noticed, no one dared to comment. It wasn't necessary. It was a beautiful night, an unusual night.

"Dis a mighty pretty night."

"Yeah, it is."

"Taint as pretty as you. Dem stars ain't haf as bright as you' smile an' dat moon, dat ol' moon don' move nowhures near as graceful as you does."

"Thankye, but you ain't oughta be sayin' all dem things."

"But deys all true and I'll tellya some mo'."

His ears rang as he walked beside her and he reveled in the conflicting warm and cold feelings that spread through his body. He wanted to hold her hand.

He thought to himself, "dis the first time we talked an' I hooked. She got me actin' funny; she gotta know. She don' seem in'rested though, an' she ain't the game-playin', hard-to-gets type. She remin' me o' de night: mysterious."

"Whure wuz ya comin' from?"

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by the ankh, also held in an outstretched hand. Akhenaten's belief that every living thing owed its existence to the Aten is clearly shown.

Another unusual feature of the Amarna period was the existence of a standardized system of writing—cuneiform—which was used for all official communications and diplomatic correspondences. Trade was rampant between the upper levels of Egyptian society and their counterparts in other kingdoms. It is a tribute to Akhenaten's success that the priests and scribes of many cultures experienced such productive contact. Akhenaten emphasized peace and refused to expand Egypt's borders through conquest, preferring instead the sweet bounty of truth and diplomacy. Unfortunately, the innovativeness of the Amarna period did not last beyond Akhenaten's reign; culture and religion reverted to their former state once he died.

Akhenaten distinguished himself through his doctrine of monotheism, the first of its kind in the world. Under his reign, peace was made with the neighboring kingdoms, and both trade and art flourished. Sadly, most of the products of

his genius did not persist beyond his death; Egypt returned to her former religion and the capital was reinstated at Thebes. Akhenaten's successor, Tutankhaten, was ruled by the clergy and nobility and was told to change his name to Tutankhamen in deference to Amen-Ra. Thus, Egyptian culture came full circle and tried to forget "the radical."

The decline of Atenism can be traced to several factors, among them unrest within the royal family. If Akhenaten did not carry on the military tradition, Egypt's more ambitious neighbors did. A war in Syria cut off most trade routes with the east, reducing prosperity. Standards of living fell, and morale was low. The very couple who were supposed to symbolize the unity and strength of the Aten were in a state of flux. Queen Tiye had brought two more of her sons to the royal court, among them a young boy named Smenkhare. "The king was a lover of beauty and the delicate and lovely boy, so like Nefertitti in looks, must have made an impression on Akhenaten . . ." [Collier, 1970] Later, Nefertitti and the king had a parting of ways, and Nefertitti left Akhenaten. "And the courtiers were forced to witness the king's strange

behavior as, month by month, Akhenaten, magnetized by Smenkhare and gripped by a passion that was not religious, heaped honor and glory on his co-regent and neglected his queen." [Collier, 1970]

Akhenaten has been described as a humanitarian and a lover of truth, beauty and peace. Though throughout most of his reign Egypt prospered, there came a time when standards of living declined, along with the king's adherence to the very principles he endorsed. Akhenaten's legacy, however, consists of a rich collection of art and poetry, and the foundations of the monotheistic religions of the world that developed later: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Suggested reading list

The Pharaohs by Lionel Casson [Chicago: Stonehenge Press, Inc. 1981]

King Sun by Joy Collier [London: Ward Lock Limited, 1970]

Black Folk Here and There by St. Clair Drake [Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Afro-American Studies, 1987]

A History of Egypt by W.M. Flinders Petrie [London: Methuen and Co., 1904]

Sara Shapiro is a freshman Anthropology major pursuing a program of cultural studies.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (cont'd from 55)

Members are alerted of violations occurring around the world through Amnesty's regional offices, which are informed through the headquarter office. Participants are given case histories which contain as much relevant information as is attainable, and then write letters, cards, and send telegrams to the proper authorities, expressing concern on behalf of specific prisoners. This relatively simple tactic of the letter writing campaign, often works wonders, as it did in the case of a Dominican Republic trade union leader, Julio de Peña Valdez.

"When the first two hundred letters came, the guards gave me back my clothes. Then the next two hundred letters came and the prison director came to see me. When the next pile of letters arrived, the director got in touch with his superior. The letters kept coming and coming: three thousand of them. The president was informed. The letters still kept arriving and the president called the prison and told them to let me go.

"After I was released, the president called me to his office for a man-to-man talk. He said: 'How is it that a trade union leader like you has so many friends all over the world?' He showed me an enormous box full of letters he had received and, when we parted, he gave them to me. I still have them." [from *Amnesty Inter-*

national: The Human Rights Story by Jonathan Power]

Amnesty members also organize vigils at government embassies, gather signatures for petitions, and participate in community awareness projects. Many are also involved with campaigns that address particular issues, such as the death penalty and torture. Benefits are also arranged to raise funds so that food, clothing, and medical supplies may be shipped to victims and their families.

Alberto Alarcon is eight. He lives with his father in Tungurahua, Navo Province, Ecuador. In May 1987, soldiers burst into the Alarcon home attacking Alberto and his father. They reportedly threw the child over a roll of barbed wire and beat him. Then the soldiers forced the boy's head under water until he nearly drowned. They were apparently looking for a rifle a neighbor had stolen.

Since its inception, Amnesty has taken up over 25,000 cases to aid prisoners of conscience in countries around the world. In the United States last year alone, 150 of the prisoners adopted by local groups were released.

The key to Amnesty's success is pressure. Constant, continuous pressure enacted through meaningful communication. One released prisoner from the Republic of Korea spoke before an Amnesty conference in California and reaffirmed the effectiveness of Amnesty's endeavors.

"All the dictators have fantasies that they can suffocate and divide people in their own country. Under these circumstances we know what they are afraid of most is world opinion and criticism of their tyranny. Here we can see the effective role of the Amnesty International movement encouraging the oppressed."

As an Amnesty International member, one must have not only unwavering devotion to the human rights cause, but also perseverance and hope, since most cases are not resolved quickly—if at all. As Louis Wigdor, former coordinator of the Amherst Amnesty chapter put it, "There's a real time commitment of conscience and heart involved."

The Amherst group was started in the late 1970s, and presently has about 30 members, of which 15 or so are con-

sidered active. They attend the monthly meetings and write between 5-6 letters per month on behalf of an adopted prisoner during that time.

Adopted prisoners add a more personal touch to the group's efforts, since that individual becomes the responsibility of the group. Wigdor says, "Focusing on just one person, you tend to identify with that person. He or she becomes your own case."

But, he adds, "You have to be in it for the long haul," as long periods of time may go by without any sort of recognition of the group's efforts. "You can become very despondent, say, if you don't hear anything on a prisoner for 5 years."

One aim of the Amherst group is to encourage local opinion leaders to get involved with the letter writing campaign. Peter Pouncey, the president of Amherst College, once wrote on behalf of a prisoner in the People's Republic of China—and got a response from the government.

"It was basically just an acknowledgment that the prisoner was being held, but the response was still unprecedented," Wigdor said. "But you don't know what to expect going into a case, and often months go by without any response."

According to Wigdor, the governments that most often solicit replies are the Latin American nations. He also noted that getting congresspersons to write is usually instrumental in receiving government reaction.

The Amherst group also partakes in the Regional Action Network. This allows group members to more closely focus on cases in their chosen area of the world. Amherst concentrates mainly on Central America, but also in Turkey and within the Pacific Islands region.

A more controversial Amherst involvement is the group's participation in car-

On January 19, 1976, Jamal Benomar, a young student activist who had been taking part in demonstrations calling for democracy in Morocco, suddenly found himself swept into the eye of a horrible nightmare: "It was around midnight," Jamal recalled. "Ten armed secret policemen broke into my flat. I was blindfolded and handcuffed and taken to the secret police station. There they told me they were going to have a party in honor of my arrest. They were laughing and drinking. I was naked surrounded by a group of policemen. They started beating me. They tied my ankles to a bar and beat the soles of my feet. They pushed my head into a bucket of excrement . . ." Moroccan authorities kept Jamal in detention for eight months before transferring him, untried for any offense, to a regular prison. It would be eight long years before Jamal would walk in freedom again.

paigns to abolish the death penalty—for which most of their work is done in the United States.

"Amherst has a particular interest in that. We write mostly on behalf of United

States prisoners, which is a different twist; usually we're writing to other countries," says Wigdor.

Amnesty International has campus groups at many colleges as well, where students work to educate their communities on the preservation of human rights and send letters on behalf of individual prisoners. Some also invite prominent human rights advocates to speak on their campuses.

There are also programs that bring together colleagues and peers to work for fellow professionals who face danger abroad. The Health Professionals Network assists with cases in which serious medical concerns are at stake, and invite other medical workers to join them in the struggle against torture through educational programs. The Legal Support Network encourages participants from the legal profession to take part in research pertaining to cases, in addition to working for imprisoned colleagues.

Individual participation is also possible through campaigns outlined in Amnesty International USA's newsletter, *Amnesty Action*.

In 1977, Amnesty International won the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts "to promote global observance of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights." But while there are many people who are free today because of Amnesty's work, there are many times more who are in constant danger, who live under an ever-threatening cloud of oppression—right at this moment, and every day of their lives. For anyone concerned with helping their fellow human beings to attain security and peace of mind, Amnesty provides them with a rational answer to what often appears to be a hopeless problem.

Cathy Mahoney is a Journalism major.

RISE ABOVE RESENTMENT

by Stuart Rankin

Rise above resentment.

Bellies filled with pride.

Shutlorn minds, full of the past,

Cast all you know aside.

The art of acceptance.

Cultivation of awareness.

Shadows cast by ignorance

Oppress the practice of fairness.

The compromise by all.

Some more than others.

An evolution in eradication.

Will we ever all be brothers?

*Be forewarned. Used to be an Experience meant making you a bit older. This one makes you wiser. With the assistance of Mitch Mitchell on drums and Noel Redding on guitar, Jimi Hendrix breaks the world into interesting fragments. Then reassembles it. You hear with new ears after being Experienced. Those who've seen him perform know only part of this Experience. They rave about a young man who plays guitar in more positions than anybody before him. His debut album will put the heads of Hendrix listeners into some novel positions. Be forewarned.**

Monterey Pop Festival. The year is 1967. In the crowd of seven thousand, no one has ever heard of the man. We stand in front of an enormous stage. He comes on stage and creates a sensation. The first couple of numbers are slow, sending the fans into a fury of anticipation. Then the band does Rolling Stone. The crowd goes berserk. Smoke bombs fill the air and his guitar catches fire. The group's set is over. Officials try for thirty minutes to quiet the crowd down. We must hear more. Close your eyes. We're going on a trip to the future. Our destination? England, 1969.

I hope you're enjoying the journey, I am. No throwing cigarette butts out the window . . .

"A bit more volume on this one Charlie—it's gonna need it. Let's 'ave a welcome for Billy Cox on bass, Mitch Mitchell on drums . . ." the unexcitable soft south London mumble sounds as though he were talking to himself, ". . . and the man with the guitar, Jimi Hendrix."

Thousands of fans scream with wild excitement and anticipation. This Black American guitarist is at the height of his career. He's outrageous in a 'do borrowed from Bob Dylan, ostentatious clothing reminiscent of the Victorian era, a sly boyish smile and a long slim tongue that licks nervously over his lips. Close your eyes and look around you. There are young girls about to lose their minds. Moreover, thousands of white boys aged between 15 and 25 have come for outrage, rebellion and the best blues/rock guitarist they've ever heard. Look up. In the VIP section. Thousands of plain faces are joined by Mick Jagger, Eric Clapton, Paul McCartney and the like.

Yeah, thank you very much. It has been a long time, hasn't it? That does mean peace, not this. (laughter) Peace. OK, give us about a minute to tune up all right? Give us about a minute to tune up.

A left-handed Jimi, with his guitar upside down, tunes up with the remaining

two of this trio. There's a lot of static and feedback from the electric instruments. Good. Listen.

It's so good to be back in England. What I'd like to do is start off with a theme that everybody knows out there. You could join in and start singin'. As a matter of fact, it would sound better if you'd stand up for your country, and your duty is to start singin'. And if you don't, fuck you.

The wild man winds up and explodes into a screaming passionate moan of 'God Save the Queen'. Somewhere amidst all the intentional noise, an inoffensive, harmonically correct melody comes out of the amplifier as Jimi dismembers the country's national anthem before their very eyes and ears.

Oblivious to the cheers of appreciation, he keeps the momentum alive and with a mumble of "what the hell," Jimi bursts into the Beatle's *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. He plays it like it's never been played before. He really can't sing that well. No member of this trio is all that attractive. In fact, they all appear rather gaudy. So what is it about this 22 year-old Black man that is driving us crazy with excitement? Look around you again. The diversity of the crowd can't explain it either. Surely 15 year-old acne ridden white boys haven't come in the same interest as the older men and women in their early twenties. What about the Blacks in the audience? Surely they've come to hear Black music — blues, soul. . . . What are they doing at a rock concert?

Guitarist and blues singer, Johnny Winter said of him, "He had fantastic music ability and could create feelings nobody else could. His guitar was like an extension of his soul. It wasn't even a guitar or notes or music. It was him. He was just projecting Jimi Hendrix."

Although the song is finished, the energy from "Sgt. Pepper" is still pulsating through the crowd. We are up. Give us more outrage, wild man. C'mon!

Hendrix listens to his fans for a minute. More tuning. We're soaking wet with expectation. We are in heat awaiting our climax from the master on stage.

They call this one the blues and we call this one Red House. We're gonna do that for a second. Jimi slides down simple arpeggios into this soft funky blues jam. No! We're not ready to come down. Not yet Jimi! The wild one ignores the pulsating energy that he's extracting from all over this venue.

It's a beautiful melodic performance—powerful and fluent. A raw, gentle intro caresses the obedient, tumultuous crowd. Jimi sings. *There's a Red House over yonder baby. That's where my baby stays.* The sound of Mitch Mitchell's drums beat a steady and slow rhythm.



STARS THAT LAUGHING

Lord there's a Red House over yonder baby, that's where my baby stays. Lord I ain't been home to see my fuzzy-headed baby, Lord in about ninety-nine and one half days. The sympathetic bass of Billy Cox subliminally seduces the crowd. Jimi sings, tenderly stroking the melody without interrupting the rhythm. Wait a minute, somethin's wrong. Wait a minute, somethin's wrong. Lord, I got a bad, bad feelin' that my baby don't live here no more. Too bad, she ain't say a damn thing about leavin'. But I still got my guitar.

Jimi surges forth into a violent blues solo as the rhythm steadily increases with emotion. The wild one is bringing us up again. The guitar is erect as he begins the climax with energy, vibrato, feedback and sweat. The solo increases in volume, speed and energy only to come to an abrupt halt. Billy Cox teases us with a gentle walking bass line. Jimi commences a tender solo without his rhythm section. The seduction begins again. We are weak with anticipation. Each note makes us shudder with excitement. The momentum picks up, but the tenderness of Jimi's guitar remains. The momentum slows



PLAY WITH SAM'S DICE

right down to nothing again. Is it over? The crowd cheers hesitantly.

Jimi drops to his knees and plunges into a violent, funky blues jam with his rhythm section. The beat is definite and slow. Jimi's playing is fluid and warm. The wild one is nearly on his back now. The speed of his solo is incredible. Hold on tight.

If my baby don't love me no more . . . Hey! I know her sister will. Jimi completes this performance with loud distorted classic blues dissonance.

Cries of appreciation overwhelm Jimi. The crowd is going mad!

Open your eyes. That was just a taste of the Experience. The man reeks of versatility in his style of playing and the different roles he assumes in his lyrics. From the narrator on *Highway Chile* to the sexual teaser in *Fire* and *Foxy Lady*.

His first lyrics were influenced by his tastes in science fiction and LSD. One of his earliest compositions, *Stars That Play With Laughing Sam's Dice*, could be abbreviated to STP-LSD.

Although Hendrix's playing style was

unique, Bob Dylan had a big influence on the young musician's career.

Jimi's uniqueness came from the fact that he possessed soul—a quality which other rock musicians lacked. Perhaps it was the sensitivity of a young man whose mother died when he was only a small boy. Perhaps it was the strong loving relationship Jimi shared with his father, Al Hendrix. Perhaps it was the enormous jazz exposure Jimi had in the 1940s, growing up in Seattle, Washington. Whatever the reason, Jimi was different, and everybody knew it.

He had always been interested in music. As a child, he would pretend the broom was a guitar and play with it. From the day his father bought him his first guitar, it became another part of his anatomy. "While he waited for adulthood, he talked to his guitar. Like a new person in the household his guitar became alive, it made a world of sound. It held all the songs, all the melodies, and secrets of the universe." (Henderson:1978)

Jimi began his musical career with the Rocking Kings. When he was only eighteen years old. At first he had been shy and played rather badly. But his good ear and sincerity allowed for Jimi to listen to every kind of musical expression and idea. He became the best R&B and rock-n-roll guitarist in Seattle.

In 1961, Jimi enlisted in the army with the Screaming Eagles paratroopers service. While in the army Jimi experimented with his electric guitar. He also began sleeping with it. It was no big thing.

Jimi wanted to make his father proud by remaining with the elite Screaming Eagles. However, it became evident, daily, what he wanted to do in life.

While Jimi was in the service he was befriended by Billy Cox who, like Jimi, was awaiting his walking papers from Uncle Sam. Cox was a serious student of European classical music, as well as R&B and blues. Upon hearing Jimi play, Cox recognized a genius that ranged from Beethoven to John Lee Hooker. Cox and Hendrix immediately began to jam. They added a drummer named Gary Ferguson, a second guitarist named Johnny Jones and called themselves The Casuals. The Casuals won a small following for themselves in small towns near Fort Campbell where they were stationed. After they were discharged from the army, Jimi and Billy gigged around until they reached Nashville, Tennessee. The two played together in another group called The Imperials.

After the break-up of The Imperials, Jimi played in several bands and backed up many musicians including Little Richard, the Isley Brothers, Wilson Pickett, and B.B. King. After Jimi left Little Richard's band in Los Angeles, he went on tour with Chuck Jackson, the

Supremes, Ike and Tina Turner, Jackie Wilson and others.

In 1963 Jimi settled in Harlem, New York while his musical career and reputation grew.

In Greenwich Village, Jimi met many celebrities including the Rolling Stones. He also met Chas Chandler who took him to England in 1966 to make him a star.

The first bassist in the Jimi Hendrix Experience was Noel Redding. When Chandler and Hendrix were selecting their drummer, they met a cocky, brash young man who was too confident of his abilities on drums. Typical drummer's attitude. Perfect. His name was Mitch Mitchell.

The Jimi Hendrix Experience was born October 12, 1966.

In their brief four years, The Experience toured extensively throughout the United States and Europe, in their brief four-year career. They reached their height of popularity in late 1967 and 1968. There was only one switch in personnel. Billy Cox later replaced Noel Redding on bass.

There was much speculation as to the cause of Jimi's death on Friday, September 18, 1970. Some saw his death as an accident. Others were sure it was suicide. Even the Cause of Death certificate left an open verdict due to "insufficient evidence of circumstances." Early press reports based on the Coroner's inquest suggested that he died as a result of a drug overdose. What really happened the morning of the eighteenth?

The night before, Jimi had taken nine sleeping pills at his girlfriend's flat in Notting Hill, London. When she discovered his body, she assumed he was asleep since he was breathing. Later in the evening when she couldn't wake him she phoned for an ambulance. On the way to the hospital, the paramedics sat Jimi up. However, as a result of the pills mixed with the high level of alcohol in Jimi's blood, he suffocated on his own vomit and was dead on arrival at St. Mary Abbot's Hospital in London.

Throughout Europe and the United States, millions mourned the loss of James Marshall Hendrix.

CODA

Most black musicians during the mid to late 1960s fell into the stereotypically-created manifestation of "Black Music." They gravitated towards Motown, ballads, jazz and the blues. Although much of Jimi's music may be labelled as 'blues,' he was the first Black rock artist in the sense that he invented a unique playing style and genre combining soul with electric guitar, distortion and feedback. This was atypical of soul musicians at the time—although Jimi got his share of soul by playing with several Black artists early in their career.

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE: RAYMOND A. JORDAN



State Representative Raymond A. Jordan is a very busy person. I discovered this during my attempts to interface with his schedule to request the interview. He is the first Black State Representative to be elected outside of Boston or west of Boston and has had seven successful campaigns and nearly a decade and a half of service in his district. Representative Jordan's day does not end when he leaves his office in the State House in Boston, nor when he arrives in Springfield after traveling 90 miles or so. I discovered that the six-term public official 'remains on the job' most days and evenings when home is Springfield. His presence and input is sought and required at many meetings at the community, municipal, county, and state level. He and his wife Donna are requested to appear at numerous functions within the district he represents, as well as at political gatherings throughout the city state and nation.

Through collaboration with Jordan's beautiful and charming wife Donna, I secured a date, time and an invitation to spend a late Sunday afternoon with Jordan. Mrs. Jordan tactfully arranged my visit at a time when her husband was most certain to be available.

Job, Responsibilities and Issues

My primary job is to represent the viewpoint of 35,000 people as an official of the General Court of the Commonwealth. As one of 160 State Representatives, it is my responsibility to respond to constituency requests in terms of making the laws, rules and regulations that govern the Commonwealth and at the same time provide whatever governmental assistance that is necessary.

Most people clearly understand the job of State Representative. They understand that there are people who have received employment opportunities because of me

and my office, and that people get better housing due to my efforts. People have been helped with social security and have gotten into senior citizen homes due to my efforts. Some see me as the answer man and that my main responsibility is to work with people's problems. I guess in a nutshell, that is really what it is. I work with people's problems, trying to help them out, whether it's trying to get a son or daughter into a college or university [or] trying to address a problem a parent may have with their youngster and their school principal. I try to point them in the right direction towards a solution, to the best of my ability, by calling upon my years of experience in many areas.

Problems involving teenage pregnancies, low birth weight, high infant mortality and AIDS—problems that specifically impact the minority community. Hispanics and Blacks are among my primary concerns as well and problems involving substance abuse—drugs. One of the things I try to do is to communicate the need for awareness. People really need to understand fully the implications of teenage pregnancies, AIDS, drug abuse and the pitfalls and dangers of young people being involved in those situations. We have a serious problem because teenage pregnancies are more acute in the Black and Hispanic community. We have a much higher rate. When you look at it closely because of the coalition between low income and high unemployment rate, you find both have a lot to do with teenage pregnancies. [With regards to] illiteracy, we as a race have to really get a handle on things and begin to turn these conditions around. We cannot afford to have our ladies tied down with babies having babies. And at the same time, our young men need an opportunity to really become young men—to become adults before having these children. With babies come responsibilities and sometimes for a moment's pleasure there comes long-term pain. Many plans and lifestyles can be ruined when young people have babies at fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years of age.

The problems of low birth weight are the results of some of the poor health conditions we have in our community. Babies born underweight are more apt to be sickly and they are actually starting life at a disadvantage, and we cannot afford to start our babies out with a disadvantage. We need to have healthy babies. That is why it is better for youngsters to wait, for people to wait, until they are grown, to get married, (that's right - I'm old fashioned. I feel people should wait until they're married) and are prepared to raise

a family, take care of children and provide for a family.

As an individual, I am personally not in favor of abortions, however, as a politician it is my responsibility to promote the individual choice of each person. You have to look in the mirror each day. It depends upon oneself. Again, if a person looks into the mirror everyday and decides it's the best route for them, that alternative ought to be available for them. I do not frown on people who get abortions. I understand abortions are done worldwide, as much in the white communities as in the Black. The only difference is that they are more pronounced in the Black community. I can remember in my time in our community, people would disappear and go down South, sometimes to have babies. But in the white community, they would go away for a couple of days to have an abortion. It would not be as pronounced, as obvious. So, consequently, I take a long look at people who say they are publicly against abortions. I say on a personal level, I do not favor abortion, but I feel that it is a person's individual decision as to how they handle that situation. But we can not afford to take care of, that is, contribute to higher illiteracy rates as these (babies) are often born into families where the resources are not there for them to gain a rightful and productive position in society.

Politics and Education

I would advise any young minority person interested in politics to get involved at the grassroots level. And that is when a person running for office gets really involved in that campaign. Go through the rigors of licking and stuffing envelopes, making telephone calls, looking up telephone numbers; finding out what it really takes to get elected. Too many young people want to start off as the candidate rather than get the experience of how to run a political campaign. In most political campaigns, the person with the most votes wins. And you have to demonstrate the ability to pull together a campaign organization that's going to help you get elected and at the same time raise monies. It's unfortunate that money plays such an important part in a person getting elected to office but you have to raise the necessary revenue to be elected, and at the same time you must be on top of the issues. You have to know what you're talking about. This requires a great amount of reading, a good amount of dedication and discipline in order for you to be well versed enough to go out and convince people that you can best represent their interests.

It seems that in most cases, politicians spend the majority of their time running for office, running for re-election. However, if [a person] makes that decision, I would hope that they would com-

plete their [college] education and have a field to serve as a backup in the event that they enter politics. I think a person should be a self sustaining member of society and always have a craft, trade or profession. I wouldn't mind if my daughters became involved in a political career as long as they had some other vocation as a backup in the event politics did not prove successful. Everyone cannot be a politician.

I happen to have been very well known in the community [before I ran for State Representative] because I was one of the founders of Harambee Holiday. As a co-founder of Harambee, I was in a highly visible role. In addition, I was employed by American International College where I served as the Director of the Afro-American Cultural Center. I had a responsibility to assist 250 Black students enrolled there. I also served as President of the Springfield Urban League. So I had high visibility and name recognition prior to becoming an elected official, so that when people go to the polls and make that decision as to who to vote for they recognize the name and pull the lever in my behalf.

On Racism

Everywhere you go, you will encounter racial incidents and signs of racism. Racism is a reality of the world. And the University of Massachusetts is no exception. I do not know if racism is more pronounced at the University of Massachusetts or any other place in this society or within the Commonwealth. Based upon what I hear from talking to various students and some administrators it appears to be more pronounced at the University of Massachusetts and it is a form of subtle racism. What happens is it is something that is difficult for the administration to control because it involves students. But within the administration it is very clear that we must look and see whether or not we have Black faculty and staff and Blacks in key administrative decision positions. That has a lot to do with the perceptions of the University. At the University of Massachusetts, I would say that there is a good amount (in numbers) of Blacks involved within the faculty and staff. *But as far as decision-making positions are concerned, the number of Blacks here leaves something to be desired.* How much money is available for minority students (UMass's minority community)? What kinds of dollars are put into efforts to recruit more Black faculty and staff for the University? And that is something that those persons who are doing evaluations of the University of Massachusetts have to take into consideration.

There are also many incidents that are racial within the city of Springfield. The kinds of racism that I encounter are [concerned] with the employment aspects. For example, if you look at the city of

Springfield and look at the developing trades, the amount of people that are hired by the building trades—painters, masons, carpenters, plumbers—all the better paying jobs among the building trades in the city of Springfield, out of hundreds of employers there is just one that is Black. That is racism, and that should not be.

If you look at the decision making positions, the department heads at City Hall, you'll find it leaves a lot to be desired in terms of Blacks with decision making powers. In addition, if you did an evaluation in terms of purchases of services you would find that the amount of money paid to minority community vendors under city contracts is less than 2%. That's also a form of racism. So there are situations that involve racism here that are no different than any other city. Is it more pronounced? I would say it might be a little less pronounced than other cities that I have been involved with. No where near the level of Boston, but still the situation leaves something to be desired.

My district is predominantly white so I respond to whoever calls upon me for constituency work. My first preference is to people who live within the district. Even though I am a state representative, I am a Black person first, therefore, my primary focus is on the Black community because we need more assistance, and I make no bones about it. I'm a Black state representative in regards to my priorities and what begins to happen is I have to spend more time addressing the concerns of the Black community because there are fewer of me (Black elected officials). Out of 160 state representatives, there are only six that are Black.

I would like to add that for most people that are interested in entering politics, it is important for them to understand that you have to start with yourself by getting yourself in a position to be elected. No one wants someone who is not going to speak out in their best interests. It's not a case of speaking out and expressing your own opinion solely but one of reflecting the will of their constituency. That's important! It's easy for a person who is an elected official to be either a politician or a statesman. As a politician, you can do what's politically expedient and not just make a decision that might not be irresponsible. A statesman is a person that makes the decision that's not necessarily expedient. What you have to do is reflect, evaluate the information you have available to you and make a decision on it. You then decide whether you are going to be a politician or a statesman. I prefer being a statesman. People do not necessarily understand or sometimes agree with the decisions I make, but as an elected official, I have to live with that, because I will be elected on the decisions I make, whether they are right or wrong.

Dawn Marshall is a UMass student.

HENDRIX ON RECORD

During his career, Hendrix released only five albums. They were issued by Warner Brothers/Reprise, his official label in the U.S. and by Polydor and Track, his official labels in Europe and the Untied Kingdom. These LP's include: *Are You Experienced?*, *Axis: Bold as Love*, *Electric Lady Land*, *Smash Hits*, and *Otis Redding/Jimi Hendrix at Monterey*. *Band of Gypsies* was released by Capitol after the tapes from the historic Fillmore East New Year's Eve concert of 1969 were used to settle a lawsuit.

After Hendrix's death, several albums appeared under varying circumstances. These albums include: *The Cry of Love*, *Rainbow Bridge*, *Hendrix In the West*, *War Heroes*, *Sound Track Recording from the Film Jimi Hendrix*, and *Loose Ends*. *Loose Ends* is available in England and in Europe.

Independent producer Alan Douglas spun off some albums from a mass of some 600 hours of raw, unedited tapes that Hendrix had left in his Electric Lady Studios and elsewhere. *Crash Landing* and *Midnight Lightning* were released in 1975. Other LP's released after Jimi's death include: *The Essential Jimi Hendrix*, *Nine to the Universe*, *Woodstock*, *Woodstock Two*, and *the Isle of Wright* performance (available only in the U.K.) In Germany Polydor has released a twelve volume set of all official European albums called simply *Jimi Hendrix*.

When I die, just keep playing the records.
-Jimi Hendrix

DISCOGRAPHY

Official Recordings (United Kingdom): The Jimi Hendrix Experience; *Axis: Bold as Love*; *Electric Lady Land*; *Band of Gypsies*; *Cry of Love*; *War Heroes*; *Smash Hits*; The Jimi Hendrix Experience: *Backtrack Three*; The Jimi Hendrix Experience: *Backtrack Four*; The Jimi Hendrix Experience: *Backtrack Ten*; *Jimi Hendrix at Monterey Pop Festival*; *Experience: Original Sound Track*; *Woodstock*; *Woodstock Two*; *At the Isle of Wright*; *Hendrix in the West*; *Rainbow Bridge: Motion Picture Soundtrack*. (Polydor), **Earlier Recordings**: *Jimi Hendrix and the Isley Brothers*; *Jimi Hendrix and Lonnie Youngblood*; *Jimi Hendrix and Curtis Knight*. **Bootleg LP's**: *Live Experience 1967-68*; *Live In Hawaii, Maui, 1970*; *Jimi Hendrix Live at the Los Angeles Forum*; *Sky High*; *The Jimi Hendrix Experience with Ginger Baker*.

Rio Gabriel is a Communications and Film major from Toronto, Canada.

*Taken from the record jacket of *Are You Experienced?*

CANE (cont'd from 87)

"Nowhures in p'ticla, jes walkin'," she answered, quickening her pace.

"C'mon now, peoples jes don' walk nowhures 'bitually."

"Ac'tully, I wuz comin' from de jailhouse."

"De prison! Woman, whut de hell you doin' 'round dem no 'counts for? Is you sick?"

"Whut de hell you mean no 'counts? And what de hell you mean sick?"

"Xactly whut I said. Why you think dey's locked up fo? Not 'cause deys wentta church ev'y Sunday. Dey ain't no good, ya shouldn' be roun' dem. Yo' papa know you be goin out dere? Ifn' he don' I make sho' he do t'night, soon as we gets home. Uh-huh, dat's right."

"Hol' it, one dam' minute." She stopped and put her hand on her hip. "Whut you mean you gonna tell my papa whure I been soon as we gets home? Ain't no home to you. Who de hell you think you is? Ya ain't none o' my dam' man. Shit. Let a negro walk you' behin' home an' he think he gots 'xclusive rights on ya. Dam."

"Now hol' on, don' be cussin' me. Tain't fit-in' fo' no girl to be talkin' lak dat. Anyhow, lak I wuz sayin', ain't nuthin' but no 'counts be in de jail an' don' nuthin' but no good womens be hangin' 'round dere. You gots a man out der o' sumthin'? If ya does, what de hell you doin wid me walkin' you home?"

"Firstly, yo' behin' ain't walkin' me home, you is only goin' haf de way. Secondly, you knows whut I doin' at de prison, de whole dam' town knows. Thirdly, I cuss when I dam' well feel lak it. Shit. Lastly, whut if I do gots a man out dere dat don' nobody know 'bout?"

"Well, I jes stop right here and go de hell home."

"Bye."

"Jes tryin' to make con'vasation, 'fo you goin' jump down my throat. 'Sides, I know whure you lives any how and who ya is. . ."

"Lak I been sayin' all night, ev'ybody 'round here know ev'body else. 'Body ain't gots no kinda privacy 'round here."

"An I know why you wuz at de prison, but. . ."

"Negro, wuz you listenin' to whut I was sayin'? An' you mean to tell me dat ya went through all dat pr'tense? I don' under'stan' dat. Is you sick?"

"No, I ain't sick an' it don' matter now 'cause I goin' home."

"Bout dam' time. Bye." She rolled her eyes and turned her back. Her feet sounded heavier on the ground.

"Dam she cold," he thought. She certainly was a strong woman, a one of a kind original. She was right, everyone knew everyone else's business in the town. Her trips to the prison served two purposes: to see her brother and to earn extra money for the family. She cooked the meals for the inmates and the police. It was said that she

helped to protect her brother by keeping the policemen happy with her cooking. They were not willing to give up her nice meals, by having her brother meet some unfortunate accident, as more than a few of the blacks did. She knew how to protect what was hers by any means possible. Almost home, she realized that her father would wonder what had taken her so long. Although she knew she couldn't lie and she couldn't tell the truth, to stretch the truth would suffice. To lie in such a close-knit community would get her into more trouble than telling the entire truth.

"That Cane c'tainly wuz strange, but I do lak 'im."

Only the sound of the night creatures filled Cane's ears, he was oblivious to the gentle human noises that also surrounded him. He was oblivious to the curious stares, he was oblivious to the human world, only the soothing ruckus of the nocturnal creatures had his attention. The dark woods invited him to come and immerse himself in the tranquility that they possessed. A brook gurgled gently nearby, the nestling of leaves, the chirping of crickets, the buzz of mosquitoes and his steady breathing were the only sounds Cane heard. "Whut she mean ifn' she gots a man out dere?," he smiled. The moon danced playfully upon the brook, contorting and wrinkling as it floated downstream. A breeze moved the otherwise still night air. Cane shivered, not from the sudden breeze but from thinking about Fern. His Fern. "Fern." A smile deepened and spread across his glistening face.



Vincent Smith THE POET GIVING A DRAMATIC READING WITH JAZZ ENSEMBLE © 1985 James B. Gwynne/Steppingstones Press.



ASHANTI

The history of the Ashanti people is said to have started with their greatest king, Osei Kofu Tutu, and his long time friend Okomfo Anokye. When Osei Tutu was young, he was sent to be educated at the court of Denkyara. There he had a love affair with the sister of the king of Denkyara. Because of this, Osei Tutu was forced to flee for his life. He sought refuge in the land of Akwamu. It was here that he met Okomfo Anokye, and the two men became close friends. Upon hearing about the death of his uncle Obiri Yeboa, Osei Tutu returned to Ashanti with Okomfo Anokye accompanying him.

Until this time, the Ashanti kingdom had been fragmented into several different tribes. Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye knew that in order to defeat their enemies, they had to unite these chiefs into one nation. Okomfo set about to accomplish this task by declaring that all Ashanti tribes descended from a common ancestress. This, by tradition, they believed. The only problem was to decide who would rule the nation. It was at this point that Okomfo is said to have performed his magic and pulled a Golden Stool down from the heavens; Okomfo Anokye was respected among the Ashanti for his magic. The stool landed on the lap of Osei Tutu, and none disputed that he had been chosen by the ancestors to be the ruler of the Ashanti.

Osei Tutu was a generous ruler who listened to every member of the Ashanti Council, made up of all the tribal chiefs, whom Osei Tutu allowed to retain their original chieftain powers. Osei Tutu then immediately set about to defeat the Doma, the tribal enemy that was responsible for the death of his uncle. Henceforth the Golden Stool was declared to contain the soul of the Ashanti people. With the hope given them by Okomfo Anokye, the Ashanti warriors defeated the Doma.

To this point in time, the Ashanti were paying tribute to the Denkyara. Osei Tutu sought to end this. The guns and ammunition needed for such a war had to pass through Denkyara territory. The Denkyara allowed passage of weapons for some unknown reason into the hands of the Ashanti. After many battles, the

Ashanti were victorious in the war. Among the booty extracted from the Denkyara was a note by which the Dutch agreed to pay rent for a fort they had in Elima, a country that had formerly belonged to the Denkyara and had now passed into Ashanti hands. This brought the Ashanti into contact with the politics of the coast of West Africa.

Although the Ashanti had defeated the Denkyara, the Akim, one of the Denkyara's allies, decided not to accept the Ashanti as sovereign. Osei Tutu decided to bring the Akim under subjugation as soon as possible. While Osei Tutu and his army were crossing the Prah River to engage in war, the Akim set an ambush and killed the king. The Akim warriors were lauded for the killing of Osei Tutu, but later they were punished because of the lack of ethics involved; his body had fallen into the river and was never retrieved. Osei Tutu's army retreated to the Ashanti capital of Kumasi. Although the death of Osei Tutu caused considerable panic among the Ashanti, the nation remained united due to the past efforts of Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye. Ashanti rose to become one of Africa's most powerful nations.

Osei Tutu was the father of a tribe that became a powerful African state. The Ashanti became involved in the affairs of the coast of Africa, which usually brought them into contact with the Europeans. The Europeans usually tried not to interfere with tribal wars, unless there was something beneficial in it for them. The Ashanti's expanding power threatened the Europeans.

In the late 1800s, the Fanti, a neighboring enemy of the Ashanti, declared war on them. The Ashanti called upon their British allies for support. The Fanti along with three thousand British soldiers under the command of Lord Wolseley, marched against the Ashanti. They reached the Ashanti capital of Kumasi and completely destroyed it. The Ashanti were brave in their fight, but their weapons, in the long run, were no match for the British cannons. The Europeans had abandoned all policy of non-interference. As a result of their loss, the Ashanti agreed to pay 50,000 ounces of gold to the British and

to keep the road used for access into the Ashanti capital open.

The British retired after their victory and the Ashanti gained control once again. The Ashanti abandoned all agreements made with the British and indeed paid very little of the 50,000 in gold to them. In 1896, a new Ashantehene ascended to the throne. His name was Kwaka Dua III, better known as King Prempeh. King Prempeh tried to create friendly relations with the British. However, when King Prempeh declined the British Queen's offer of British protection, the British accused the Ashanti of not keeping their treaty and declared that the Ashantehene surrender himself. This King Prempeh did. He had no fear that his kingdom would suffer because the Golden Stool was safe, and it was obvious that the British had superior weapons. The British exiled the king and inflicted a heavy fine upon the Ashanti. The British had captured the Ashantehene and imprisoned many members of his family, but this was not enough for them. In order to completely destroy the spirit of the Ashanti people, the British had to attain the Golden Stool, which by this time was very valuable adorned with many jewels and gold.

Sir Fredrick Hodgeson went to Ashanti and not only demanded the Golden Stool but asked to sit on it. This shocked the Ashanti. So great was the insult to Ashanti that they prepared to once again take up arms against the British. Though some of the elders expressed apprehension about fighting the British, Yaa Asantewaa, the Queen Mother of Ejisu, gave her people the incentive to fight. She inquired of them where was their courage and told them that if the Ashanti men would not fight, the Ashanti women would. Her speech inspired the Ashanti men and once again, they were at war with the British. This war was led by Yaa Asantewaa herself, and was later named after her. The British fought the war with their unrivaled weapons. Yaa Asantewaa was captured, and thus ended the war led by this brave Queen Mother of Ashanti.

Terrelle Hodge is a sophomore COINS major from Albany, New York.

DRUM STAFF



Photo by Nelson Stevens

Victor Alexander, Desmond Dorsett — design and layout coordinator, Terrelle Hodge, Rio Gabriel, Mark T. Childs — editor, Sara Shapiro — editor, Dawn Marshall, Pancho Morris, Martha Grier-Deen — editor-in-chief and Susan (Sushi) Hodgkins — design and layout.

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Prayer for Africa

English by Katherine F. Rohrbough
Swahili from Ngethe Njroje
Original Zulu by Enoch Sontonga

Enoch Sontonga
Arr. by Walter F. Anderson

With dignity

English Bless, O Lord, our coun - try, Af - ri - ca, So that she may wak - en
Swahili Bwa-na, i - ba - ri - ki Af - ri - ka, I - li - i - pa - te
Zulu Nko-si, si - kel - el' i Af - ri - ka, Mal - u - pa - kam' u - pon -

from her sleep. Fill her horn with plen - ty, guide her feet.
ku - am - ka. Ma - om - bi ye tu ya - si - ki - lel.
do - lway - o; Yi - va im - i - tan - da - zo ye - tu.

Hear us, faith - ful sons.* Spir - it, de - scend, (Spir - it, Spir - it,)
U - tu - ba - ri - ki. U - je Ro - ho, (U - je, U - je,)
U - si - si - kel - el - e, Yih - la Moy - a, (Yih - la Moy - a,)

Spir - it, de - scend, Spir - it, de - scend, Spir - it di - vine.
U - je Ro - ho. U - je Ro - ho, U - tu - ja - ze.
Yih - la Moy - a. Oy - ing cwel - e.

* "ones" may be substituted for sons.

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THE ORIGIN OF "NKOSI SIELEL'I AFRIKA"

Nkos Sikele' i Afrika was composed in 1897 and first publicly sung in 1899. The composition has a somewhat melancholy strain. The black folk around Johannesburg were, at the time, far from happy. The piece was commonly sung in native day schools and further popularized by the Ohlange Zulu Choir that visited the Rand giving concerts.

When the African National Congress flourished, its leaders adopted this piece as a closing anthem for their meetings, and this soon became a custom in the other provinces in connection with all types of Bantu organizations. Of late the black races of the Union and the Protectorates have somehow by tacit assent adopted it as their recognized national anthem, sung before royalty and on big public occasions.

45/00/01

